

# CLAYTONIA

Newsletter of the Arkansas Native Plant Society

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## Speak Up For Public Lands

by Theo Witsell

Reprinted, with additional photos, from the Arkansas Wildlife Federation's excellent magazine *Arkansas Out of Doors* ([www.arwild.org/magazine/](http://www.arwild.org/magazine/))



This natural salt lick is one of hundreds of special spots I've found on public lands in Arkansas. It's tucked deep within the South Fourche Botanical Area, a one-of-a-kind scientific interest area I helped preserve along a high-gradient stretch of the South Fourche LaFave River in the Ouachita National Forest. Other high value habitats there include riverscour barrens, cliffs, glades, groundwater seeps, old-growth woodlands, mature forests, and "the hanging oxbow," an ancient channel scar wetland complex stranded on an old terrace 60 feet above the modern-day river.

That's my son Daniel, 10 years old at the time, on a character-building adventure with his dad that wouldn't have been possible without this public land. We fished the river, hunted for reptiles and amphibians, and hiked for miles overland, navigating with a map and compass in the mid-summer heat to explore several special areas, including the salt lick.



*(Continued from previous page)*

It's a special spot for sure – a natural opening maintained by the licking, trampling, and wallowing of wildlife. There are no human-built roads in or out, just ancient animal trails, ancestral highways that have led herds of large mammals to the lick for millennia. Excavated more than a foot deep, the salty clay banks are licked smooth, and the deepest spots are filled with brackish, mineral-rich water. Today, the muddy bottom is stamped solid with deer tracks, but if we had visited in 1800 we would no doubt have also seen the prints of bison and elk.

Public lands are ours as Americans. They are there for us to discover and explore... to take our kids and grandkids to for a taste of wild nature and adventure. They give us a place to push our personal boundaries and test ourselves, to center ourselves spiritually, and to connect with our past. Recently, proposals have been put forth to roll back protections on public lands, and even divest of them entirely. It's time to show up for public lands or risk losing these wildlife-sustaining places we know and love. Please speak up about how much you value our public lands as permanently protected refuges for people and nature.



***Daniel and I atop the cliff, feeling the current of warm air blowing from the vent on a winter's day. Photo by Bryan Rupar.***



***"The Devil's Chimney," another one-of-a-kind special spot I found while hunting rare plants in the Ouachita National Forest. This high sandstone cliff along the Alum Fork of the Saline River has a thermal vent in the top that blows a strong current of warm air. Photo by Theo Witsell.***



***The cliff face is one of just a handful of sites in the Ouachitas for Fee's Lipfern (*Myriopteris gracilis*), which grows without soil from cracks in the rock. Photo by Theo Witsell.***





**These ponds in old channel scars on a high terrace of the Alum Fork of the Saline River support many rare plant species. Ouachita National Forest. Photo by Theo Witsell.**



**Large clumps of the globally rare Cypress-knee Sedge (*Carex decomposita*) growing on stumps in an ancient mountaintop depression pond in the East Fork Wilderness, Ozark National Forest. Photo by Theo Witsell.**



**Creeping St. John's Wort (*Hypericum adpressum*) in the Alum Fork Ponds. This species is rare throughout its range and is the rarest St. John's Wort in Arkansas. Photo by John Pelton.**



**Interior Highlands endemic Ouachita Bluestar (*Amsonia hubrichtii*) in a riverscours barrens on the Irons Fork of the Ouachita River, Ouachita National Forest. Photo by Theo Witsell.**



**Globally rare Yellow Bee-balm (*Monarda luteola*) in an old-growth oak savanna at Fort Chaffee. Photo by Theo Witsell.**



(Continued from previous page)



**The South Fourche LaFave River in the South Fourche Botanical Area, a hotspot for rare plant species. Note the steep sandstone glades (right) and band of riverscours barrens (center above river bank). Photo by Theo Witsell.**



**Three other unique natural communities in “the hanging oxbow” (top to bottom): willow oak-peatmoss flatwoods, overcup oak-shoreline sedge flatwoods, and a buttonbush slough. All of these communities, and many of the plant species they support, are exceptionally rare in the Ouachita Mountains and likely represent relicts from the ancient past. Photos by Theo Witsell.**



**Daniel with a large, old Loblolly Pine (*Pinus taeda*) in a rare mountain channel scar flatwoods in “the hanging oxbow,” an ancient wetland complex 60 feet above the modern day river. This site, in the South Fourche Botanical Area, has many species typically found in the Gulf Coastal Plain that are rare in the Ouachita Mountains. Photo by Theo Witsell.**

Theo Witsell is co-founder and Chief Conservation Officer for the [Southeastern Grasslands Institute](#), a program of Austin Peay State University. He lives in Little Rock.



## Grant and Scholarship Recipients

These students, Joshua Poland, Paul Akpejelu, and Soraya Byrdsong, follow a long line of esteemed students of botany who have also received the Delzie Demaree Research Grant and/or the Aileen McWilliam Scholarship. This funding helped keep them solvent through school and launch their careers. Previous recipients have gone on to do a number of things

including: Deputy Director of the Natural Heritage Commission, Vice Provost for a university, State Botanists, Deputy Director of Conservation for The Nature Conservancy, native plant nursery owner, collections manager for the largest herbarium in Arkansas, professors of botany, botanist for NatureServe, and an Urban Forester, to name a few careers. But more importantly, this funding helped these students learn more about our natural world and in so doing helped us understand more too! I would like to thank all the members of the Arkansas Native Plant Society who pay their dues, who contribute to our annual live and silent auctions, who buy things from the auctions and all who make this organization a wonderful place to be. Your money helps us help others and your knowledge and positive energy keep us coming back for more. - Virginia



**Joshua Poland**  
Arkansas State University  
Delzie Demaree Research Grant  
\$1250



**Soraya Byrdsong**  
Arkansas State University  
Aileen McWilliam Scholarship  
\$500



**Paul Akpejelu**  
University of Arkansas  
Aileen McWilliam Scholarship  
\$750



*Diana Soteropolous (left) was one of at least 4 recipients to become a state botanist. She is now a botanist for NatureServe. Photo by Joe Ledvina.*



# Teachings of Plants at Warren Prairie Natural Area

by Virginia McDaniel

There is something about an open grassland with oak (*Quercus* sp.) and shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*) silhouetted against the backdrop of a deep blue sky and some happy clouds. A sense of peace. You can breathe. You can feel that good things are happening here. And humans are partly responsible. Humans can do good!



**Looking out at the pine flatwoods and woodlands of Warren Prairie Natural Area. Photo by Virginia McDaniel.**

Warren Prairie Natural Area is gem co-managed by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. All three organizations work to protect, as the ANHC website says, “the last remaining vestiges of the state’s natural communities.” This 6,267 acre natural area was added to the system in 1983. Before that time the land was managed like much of southeastern Arkansas: for timber production. My father-in-law went to the University of Arkansas at Monticello, about a half hour away from Warren Prairie. He said they ripped and planted the site with pine trees multiple times, only to have the trees succumb to drought due to the thin, rocky soils. This went on for decades. Foresters are persistent.

But the natural world more than a resource for humans, as Robin Wall Kimmerer teaches us in her book *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. Nature has a lot to teach us, if we will only listen. Kimmerer is a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and in the hierarchy of things in her culture, plants are at the top. After all, they have been

here much longer than humans and have a lot to teach us. Humans are referred to as “the younger brothers of creation.” Plants, animals and ecosystems can teach us about resilience, generosity, balance and interconnectedness. Humans are part of the system, not separate from it.

With this wisdom from the plants, we learned that trees aren’t meant to grow everywhere. Some places better support smaller statured plant species. Think about geocarpon (*Geocarpon minimum*), a tiny, endangered plant that grows in salt slicks, soils too thin and salty for most plants. Think about Texas sunnybells (*Schoenolirion wrightii*), violets (*Viola* spp.), and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) that need open systems managed with fire. Think about the forest structure needed by the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), a once endangered species that has recently been downgraded to threatened due to fire and forestry management by humans across the southeastern US. Over the last 40 years, Warren Prairie has been managed with thinning, mulching and fire, and the results were on display for us.

Decades of proper management were evident as trip leaders TNC terrestrial ecologist Melanie Rudolf and Forest Service botanist Virginia McDaniel set off for the afternoon walk. We walked through sand post oak (*Quercus margaretta*), past a farkleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*) in full bloom and I had just finished admiring a group of wild onions (*Allium canadense*) in flower when I realized Melanie and most of the group were out of sight.



**Chewing on the nice granny smith apple flavor of sweetleaf (*Symplocos tinctoria*). Photo by Virginia McDaniel.**



I heard from the morning group that the leaders of that walk, Melanie and ANHC botanist Ben Benton, walked at a breakneck pace, and they weren't kidding! My group of stragglers took time to chew on sweetleaf (*Symplocos tinctoria*) leaves, admire lanceleaf water willow (*Justicia ovata* var. *lanceolata*) and Oklahoma sedge (*Carex oklahomensis*), and take in the open barrens. When we finally caught up to Melanie, she was hunched over a tiny plant. Emily Hart, a first time ANPS meeting attendee, was crouched down beside her. As Melanie explained what a sundew (*Drosera brevifolia*) was, I didn't need to hear a word she said; Chase's expression said it all [author's interpretation] "OMG!!!! The sticky hairs catch and digest insects!!! That's the most insane/coolest thing I've heard in years!"



**The afternoon group attending the Warren Prairie Natural Area plant walk found some shade for a group selfie. Camera positioned by Virginia McDaniel.**



**Melanie Rudolf explains to Chase Hart how the sticky hairs on a sundew (*Drosera brevifolia*) trap insects and digest them. Photo by Virginia McDaniel.**

Our next find was special indeed. Small in stature (about 6 inches tall), alternate, lanceolate green leaves with white flowers in the axils. Melanie and I were both stumped. We had never seen this plant before! The internet was bad and so we couldn't look it up. And the apps aren't so good with rare plants. In perusing the species list we found a couple plants we didn't know and ultimately decided that it was silky dwarf morning-glory

(*Evolvulus sericeus*), a tracked species found in wet flatwoods and seepages mostly in the coastal plain of southeastern US. The kicker: It hadn't been seen at Warren Prairie in 30 years!!! This does not mean the silky dwarf morning-glory has not been here for 30 years. It's the tree falling in the woods making a sound or not scenario. If a plant exists, and no botanist sees it, does it still exist? Ah, yes! It's all about creating the right conditions for a wide variety of plants and other organisms and letting them do their thing. Sometimes we get the honor of meeting them and learning something new.



**Sundew (*Drosera brevifolia*). Photo by Eric Hunt.**



# ANPS Fall Meeting

## Sept 19-21, 2025 in Harrison, Arkansas

### Meeting details

Everybody is welcome to attend! Meeting registration is only \$10 with no pre-registration required. Registration will begin at 5:00 PM on Friday, September 19, 2025. The meeting events wrap up on Sunday, September 21 at around noon.

**Location:** Signature Tower (part of Signature Bank), Community Room  
303 N Main St Suite 100  
Harrison, AR 72602  
Google maps link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/JQygRna6cKL9Evxe8>

On Google, the building will appear as Signature Bank of Arkansas OR Signature Tower. It is the same building.

**Lodging:** 1929 Hotel Seville  
302 N Main St, Harrison, AR 72601  
Phone: (870) 741 2321  
Website: <https://www.1929hotelseville.com/>  
[Click here to book a room at our discounted rate!](#)

We have 25 rooms reserved of several sizes and rates. Rooms will be held through the end of September 4<sup>th</sup>, at which point our discount expires. Free WiFi and parking is included with a small grab-and-go breakfast option. Follow the link above to book your room at our discounted rate (first-come, first-served). Individuals are responsible for their own room and tax.

Other hotels are available nearby should you be unable to reserve a room at the 1929 Hotel Seville.

**Dining Options:** We will have a potluck meal Friday and Saturday evenings. Bring a dish or just come, eat, socialize, and learn! Alcohol is welcome, but **please avoid bringing glass bottles**. There are other dining options (fast food and others) in Harrison, and a bar/restaurant is located inside the 1929 Hotel Seville.

**Auctions:** The **silent auction** will begin at 6:00 PM on Friday and close at the end of the program on Saturday evening, and our **live auction** will begin at 7:00 PM on Friday and end later that evening. Proceeds from the auctions support the ANPS small grants program, student research grants, and

student scholarships! Bring any native-plant themed donations you would like to include in the auctions before 6:00 PM Friday. Living plants will be included in the live auction, and any other items will be included in the silent auction. Auction sheets will be provided. ***If your item does not sell, you must take it back with you at the end of the meeting.***

**Award Presentation:** The Eric and Milanne Sundell Award will be presented to Burnetta Hinterthuer on Friday evening before the live auction.

**Field trips:** Field trips to local areas of top botanical interest (e.g., Baker Prairie, Round Top Mountain) will be scheduled for Saturday 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM and Sunday 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM. You must sign up for field trips on Friday evening to allow for adequate logistical planning. Our field trips will offer both easy and more vigorous walks. We advise bringing hiking boots/shoes, bug spray, water, and a good hat!

**Speaker:** Justin Thomas, a botanist from Missouri and co-founder of the [Institute of Botanical Training](#) and [NatureCITE](#), will give a presentation on interesting stories associated with several Arkansas plants with a healthy splash of natural history at 7:00 PM on Saturday, September 20.

**More information:** For complete and up-to-date details, go to [www.anps.org](http://www.anps.org) or contact Andrew Ruegsegger at [andrewruegsegger8@gmail.com](mailto:andrewruegsegger8@gmail.com); (870) 656-9705.



*Theo Witsell shows the group wild bean (*Phaseolus polystachios*) at Lorange Creek Natural Area during the Spring 2025 Meeting. Photo by Jennifer Ogle.*



# Welcome, New ANPS Members!

## New Members to ANPS since the spring issue of Claytonia (between 07 March 2025 and 07 August 2025)

Kevin Balawejder (Russellville, AR)  
Donna Bonjour (Foreman, AR)  
Elita Caple (Oark, AR)  
Alisha Eisele (Fayetteville, AR)  
Collin Galloway (Little Rock, AR)  
Anne Greenwood (Hot Springs, AR)  
Andy Henry (Little Rock, AR)  
Brenda & Colin Hester (Paragould, AR)  
Olivia Hollifield (Little Rock, AR)  
Paula Koch (Eureka Springs, AR)  
Jenni Martsof (Morrilton, AR)  
Lynn Pride (Lonsdale, AR)  
Cindy Rimkus (Huntsville, AR)  
Lindy Streit (North Little Rock, AR)  
Linda Watkins (Vandervoort, AR)  
Jon Webb (Fayetteville, AR)

### New Life Members

Joseph Ledvina (Little Rock, AR)  
Carol Paulson (Melbourne, AR)  
Scott Simon (Fayetteville, AR)  
Douglas Zollner (Little Rock, AR)



*Come learn plants with us!!! Photo by Jennifer Ogle.*

## SAVE THE DATE!

SPRING 2026 MEETING

MAY 15 –17

Jonesboro, AR



Tulip-tree  
(*Liriodendron tulipifera*)

Photo by Eric Hunt



# Lorance Creek with Eric Sundell

by Samantha Heller

For the conclusive field trip of the ANPS Spring 2025 Meeting, Lorance Creek Natural Area was the site of choice. Attendees split into two groups, with one following Dr. Eric Sundell on a hike towards the main boardwalk, progressing through the seepy creek until its course slowly turned into a slow-moving cypress swamp.

One of the first plants he pointed out to us was Sweetleaf (*Symplocos tinctoria*), a shrub that is our only member of the family Symplocaceae. Its leaves are slightly sweet when chewed, hence the name, and more interestingly, this plant can be identified (or at least distinguished) through a “spit test”: leaves contain a yellow resin, which, when

chewed on and spat back out, is yellow instead of the usual black color of other similar plants. Several people tried the test and did find a slight yellow tint to what came out. He also showed us a couple of other common woodland species, at least in the coastal plain, which were further down the trail, including Red-ring Milkweed (*Asclepias variegata*), Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*), American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), and the thorny Devil’s Walking-stick (*Aralia spinosa*).

As we went further into the woods and closer to the creek, we began to see moisture-loving plant species like White Azalea (*Rhododendron viscosum*). Where there was standing water, we found Bladder Sedge (*Carex intumescens*), which is far cuter than its common name implies, and Dr. Sundell pointed out the first stands of a monocot with massive and regal leaves: Green Arrow Arum (*Peltandra virginica*). That was about the point

where we had to start looking carefully before stepping anywhere, lest someone accidentally kick over a crawdad chimney or, worse, stumble upon a cotton mouth. Luckily, the only critters we stumbled upon were a flighty Prothonotary Warbler and a recently deceased giant salamander (*Amphiuma* sp.).



**Eric Sundell shows the group the twin flowers of Partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*) on the trail at Lorance Creek Natural Area. The flowers fuse and form one fruit with two crowns. Photo by Samantha Heller.**

Out on the boardwalk, the swamp was lit up with all sorts of flowers, mostly in shades of white and cream: some Stiff Dogwood (*Cornus foemina*) here and there, usually with Ebony Jewelwing damselflies resting between their flowers; the tiny white blooms of Big-leaf Snowbell (*Styrax grandifolius*) more

commonly, and then the giant, black cherry-like racemes of Virginia Sweetspire (*Itea virginica*) were absolutely everywhere. The latter species often grew nestled between the buttress-like trunks of the cypress trees, and their flowers were constantly bobbing up and down, not from wind, but instead from the weight of bumblebees as they landed and circled the inflorescence for nectar.

Dr. Sundell introduced us to a number of swamp trees that might’ve otherwise blended in with the Baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*) that were just about everywhere. One of them was Swamp Tupelo (*Nyssa biflora*), which also has a buttress structure at the base of its trunk, much like the cypress. He explained that it was once considered simply a variety, and not a separate species, from Black Gum (*N. sylvatica*), despite how different the trunk, leaves, and habitat requirements are. Modern genetic work has split them into two unique entities. The other





**Eric Sundell showing the group an interesting plant. Photo by Samantha Heller.**

tree of interest was the similarly named Water Tupelo (*N. aquatica*), which has irregularly toothed leaves and a much broader base of the trunk. To the untrained eye, these would blend in with the cypress, at least until you looked upward at the leaves.

As for shrubbier species, he also showed us Bog Raisin (*Viburnum nudum*) and He-Huckleberry (*Lyonia ligustrina*). The latter species gets its name from having typical

blueberry flowers, since it is in the blueberry family, but then having hard, inedible fruit; if you were to find the flowers and come back a few months later hoping for a sweet treat, you would be totally out of luck! Despite not being snackable, it's still an interesting species of the state's more southerly wetlands.



**The irregularly toothed leaves of water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*). Photo by Samantha Heller.**



**Giant, black cherry-like racemes of Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*). Photo by Samantha Heller.**



# Spring Business Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2025

University of Arkansas, School of Forest Resources  
Weevil Drive, Monticello, Arkansas 71655

The Arkansas Native Plant Society (ANPS) held its Spring 2025 Business Meeting at the UAM Forestry Complex Building in Monticello, Arkansas. President Sarah Geurtz called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. She thanked all the members of the Board of Directors individually for their contributions to the Society. She also thanked the university for accommodating the meeting and the field trip leaders for their generous expertise.

**Approval of Minutes.** The minutes of the ANPS Business Meeting held October 5, 2024 had been published in the Spring 2025 edition of the Claytonia newsletter. Greg Rajskey moved to accept the minutes as presented; Joe Ledvina seconded; motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report.** Samantha Heller presented the statement of financial position as of March 6, 2025, reflecting a fund balance of \$12,362.37; she shared additional details of recent revenues and expenses. There were no questions

**Donation and Award.** Sarah announced that ANPS had received a gift of \$5,000 from the Arkansas Community Foundation in recognition of Eric Sundell and in memory of Milanne Sundell. She further noted that Burnetta HINTERthuer had been notified that she would be the next recipient of the Eric and Milanne Sundell Award; Burnetta gratefully acknowledged that she would be present at ANPS' Fall 2025 Meeting to accept the award.

**Ozark Chapter Report.** Sue Hubbard, representing the ANPS Ozark Chapter, reported that two field trips had been held by the chapter earlier in the spring; she reminded those present to visit the Ozark Chapter pages of the ANPS website for announcements of future events.

**Field Trips.** Sarah Geurtz thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and invited everyone to attend the Sunday morning field trip to Lorange Creek Natural Area. She noted that the Saturday morning and afternoon field trips had been well received, thanking the field trip leaders for conducting the hikes and inviting them to describe highlights of those excursions.

- Warren Prairie Natural Area, a sandy-saline environment, featured such distinctive species as sand post oak (*Quercus margaretiae*), green milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*), carnivorous sundew (*Drosera brevifolia*), and the rare silver dwarf morning-glory

(*Evolvulus sericeus*).

- At Cut-Off Creek Ravines Natural Area, visitors saw swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), lizard's tail (*Saururus cernuus*), purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*), and Canada milkvetch (*Astragalus canadensis*), along with many wetland species.
- The afternoon Plant Identification Workshop was led by Professor Richard Abbott and featured a wide range of species to illustrate an array of plant-identification features.

**Election of Officers.** The Nominating Committee put forth the slate of officers for re-election to additional two-year terms:

- Jennifer Ogle, Memorial Awards Officer
- Virginia McDaniel, Editor
- Molly Robinson, Membership Officer.

Sarah Geurtz presented each candidate individually. Greg Rajskey moved to re-elect Jennifer; seconded by Rosalie Overby; motion carried. Isaac Ogle moved to re-elect Virginia; seconded by Morgan Russell; motion carried. Isaac Ogle moved to re-elect Molly; Andrew Ruegsegger seconded; motion carried. Sarah thanked the candidates.

**Native Plant Month.** Sarah reported that the Governor had approved the recommendation to designate May as Arkansas Native Plant Month. Efforts were under way to publicize the status.

**Proposed Change to Bylaws.** Sarah reported that the Board had approved a series of minor updates to the Bylaws, renaming the Memorial Awards Officer/Committee (removing the word, "Memorial"), clarifying officer and committee roles and functions, and naming the types of available awards with greater specificity: Awards, Student Research Grants, and Student Scholarships. She asked that the membership vote to ratify the board's decision to approve these changes. Art Browning moved to do so; seconded by Andrew Ruegsegger; motion passed.

**Website and Directory.** Molly Robinson and Joe Ledvina described their ongoing efforts to research prospective improvements to the website and alternatives to publishing the member directory. As a result, no printed membership directory would be published in 2025. They reported that they had found a membership management system that would operate through an upgraded ANPS website, including automatic dues reminders and mem-





*Group attending Eric Sundell and Theo Witsell's plant walk at Lorange Creek Natural Area, April 2025. Photo by Jennifer Ogle.*

bers-only access to an online membership directory that would support direct member-to-member communications. Financial transactions between members and ANPS would be conducted primarily online. It was expected that a new system could be in place during the coming year.

**Student Grants and Awards.** Sarah reported that the Memorial Awards Committee had received several applications for grants and scholarships; the committee had vetted these applications and presented their recommendations to the Board, along with the applications. The Board had considered these at the April 24 meeting and determined to grant the following awards, asking the general membership to ratify that action.

- Joshua Poland (Arkansas State University, Jonesboro): Delzie Demaree Research Grant of \$1,250 to support research into soil-microbe influences on the dispersal of invasive plant species;
- Paul Akpejelu (University of Arkansas, Fayetteville): Aileen McWilliam Scholarship of \$750 to support statistical modeling research into the spread of invasive cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*);
- Soraya Byrdsong (Arkansas State University, Jonesboro): Aileen McWilliam Scholarship of \$500 to support her doctoral studies.

Art Browning moved to approve these awards as recommended by the Board; seconded by Andrew Ruegsegger; motion carried.

**Small Grant.** Sarah noted further that a grant application had been received from Bernice Gardens (a community garden in Little Rock) requesting \$3,000 to restore and

enhance the garden. The Board determined that the request exceeded the Society's means and decided to respond by asking the applicant to reduce the amount requested and resubmit. Margaret Morrell moved to approve the Board's decision; seconded by Andrew Ruegsegger; motion carried.

**Know Your Natives.** Sarah reported that work continued on making the full archive of the Know Your Natives articles available to ANPS members.

**Volunteer Requests.** The Plum Bayou Research Station had shared a call for volunteers to assist with maintenance of their resource garden (a native plant garden that exhibits plant resources that were used when the site was occupied between AD650 to AD1050). Blandy Experimental Farm and the State Arboretum of Virginia had issued a request for seed representing local genotypes to grow in their arboretum; volunteers were welcome to contribute.

**Bonfire.** Sarah reminded the members that ANPS merchandise is available online through the Bonfire site and noted that the Bonfire search function can be quirky: she recommended typing the full name of the Arkansas Native Plant Society (rather than simply ANPS).

**Fall Meeting.** It was announced that the ANPS Fall Meeting would be held in Harrison over the weekend of September 19-21, 2025.

**Adjourn.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gregory T. Rajskey (Secretary)



# Women in Fire

by Melanie Rudolf

On the morning of June 1<sup>st</sup>, four women left the shop of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) field office in Little Rock to head for the loess hills of western Iowa. Loaded with fire retardant Nomex clothing, rakes, drip torches, and weather kits, we began our journey to Trailblazers, a weeklong prescribed fire workshop hosted by TNC at Broken Kettle Grasslands Preserve. The workshop centers around empowering female fire practitioners by creating a safe, supportive environment for women to learn and mentor each other. The workshop hosted over 40 women and non-binary folks this year, and was attended by a large range of individuals, from students, to state conservation staff, to conservation volunteers. In a male-dominated field, Trailblazers offers something unique.

We arrived late in the evening on June 1<sup>st</sup> and set up tents, ready for the week ahead. The first two days were focused on getting people their entry level prescribed fire qualifications and training in first aid, weather, basic fire ecology, radio communication, and tools used on a fire line. On the third day of the workshop, women were split into squads to go apply live fire. For some women, this was their first time on a fire. They worked alongside other women with decades of experience.

As we left for our different burn units throughout the rolling loess hills, there was an electric charge in the air. Some squads were burning gorgeous remnant tallgrass prairie, full of bluestems (*Schizachyrium scoparium* and *Andropogon gerardi*), lead plant (*Amorpha canescens*), breadroot (*Pediomelum esculentum*), large-flowered beardtongue (*Penstemon grandiflorus*), and western snowberry (*Symphoricarpos occidentalis*), while others were burning prairie restoration sites full of the dreaded sweet brome (*Bromus inermis*). The goal was clear: put good fire on the ground while creating leadership and learning opportunities for the broad range of skillsets present.

We ended up burning 335 acres of prairie in the two days of live fire during the workshop. When talking to the women towards the end of the week, there were smiles all around. I loved hearing one of the women describe how she had served as a burn boss trainee (the position in charge of overseeing the burn) and had never seen herself as having a leadership position in fire.

For myself, the week challenged me to step further into positions of leadership, providing knowledge and direction to those with less experience, and exchanging

knowledge with those with greater experience. It pushed me to dive deeper into the fire world, a world which I had previously stayed comfortably on the edge of.

*Fire.*

The Global Fire Assessment estimates that 53% of the world's ecosystems are fire-dependent—defined ecosystems “where most of the species have evolved in the presence of fire, and where fire is an essential process for conserving biodiversity” (Shlisky et al. 2007). Arkansas is situated



**Melanie serving as the squad boss, directing the ignition. Photo by Casey Struecker (TNC).**

between the Eastern Deciduous Forest and the Great Plains, creating conditions to support a unique combination of ecosystems within this ecotone. Many of our natural communities require fire, from the shortleaf pine and post oak woodlands in the Ouachita Mountains, to the Blackland Prairies in southwest Arkansas. Many of our drier ecosystems are fire-dependent, requiring fire to maintain the structure and composition of the biotic community. In these systems, fire reduces leaf litter and duff, exposes soil for seed germination, affects the carbon and nitrogen availability to plants, reduces shrub and tree encroachment in prairies and glades, and reduces tree and shrub density in our open woodlands. Without fire, these fire-dependent ecosystems become shaded and depauperate, with understories composed of more common shade tolerant species such as Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), and a thick midstory of sweet





***Wrapping up ignition with some fun and interesting topography in the loess hills in Iowa. Photo by Melanie Rudolf (TNC).***

gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) and winged elm (*Ulmus alata*). We need our fire-dependent ecosystems to have intact fire regimes to maintain our highly diverse landscape.

*To meet this challenge, we need future fire practitioners.*

As ecosystems of the world are impacted through the building of our human worlds, so are they changed by shifts to ecosystem processes. Fire is a process that has been at odds with human growth and development, as we don't want our homes damaged or our crops burnt. While fire was part of the landscape historically, it was suppressed across the United States as Europeans moved throughout North America. We now know that suppressing fire creates problems (both socially and ecologically) and we must restore fire to ecosystems that depend on it. Over the past 40 or more years, dedicated people have worked to return fire to the landscapes of Arkansas, with the intent of reducing wildfire risk to communities and increasing biodiversity in our fire-dependent ecosystems. The return of fire to places where humans live means that a highly skilled workforce is needed to apply this fire. To have both ecological and community benefits, we need prescribed fire to be applied in a safe and ecologically informed manner. Safety for the people performing the fire, safety for the human

communities surrounding these unique ecosystems, and the perspective to read what fire is needed to support ecosystem resiliency and diversity.

People across the country have been rising to this challenge of growing the future of the fire workforce. The historically male-dominated field is becoming increasingly diverse due to the efforts of individuals and organizations. Trailblazers is one of those efforts, crafted to increase the diversity and resiliency of the workforce to tackle the challenge of restoring ecological fire regimes. When growing future fire leaders, opportunities for individuals to see fire as a real career are invaluable.

From my perspective, Trailblazers was perspective shifting. It is rare to have a group with such varied skillsets all learning together. For some participants, this was their first time on a fire. For others, they

had decades of experience. I was able to see myself in a leadership role, modeled by the women who walked before me. Women lighting side by side, walking over the rolling hills, decked out in their Nomex yellow shirts and green pants was a beautiful sight to see. As we think about the future of fire, I will celebrate and appreciate events that bring more perspectives to the field. We will need everyone putting their heads together to continue bringing good ecological fire to Arkansas and beyond.



***Fire maintain pine-oak woodland on the Caddo-Womble Ranger District of the Ouachita National Forest. Photo by Virginia McDaniel.***



# Celebrating 150 Years of Botanical Exploration at the UARK Herbarium

by Maribeth Latvis and Jennifer Ogle

This year marks an important milestone in Arkansas botany: the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the University of Arkansas Herbarium! Located in Fayetteville at the University of Arkansas, UARK is the oldest and largest herbarium in the state and supports the research, teaching, and extension missions of the U of A while serving as an important resource for state and federal agencies (e.g. ANHC, USFS).

Our holdings from northwestern Arkansas, including from the Ozark and Ouachita National Forests, are significant assets that set us apart from other herbaria. These ranges are some of the oldest mountains in North America and represent biodiversity hotspots within the United States, including several endemic plant species. As such, UARK includes 65 type specimens and contributions from several notable collectors, including Francis L. Harvey, Delzie Demaree, Dwight M. Moore, John T. Buchholz, and Hugh H. Iltis, among others.

As a record of plant biodiversity through space and time, the research utility of these collections extends beyond identification and taxonomy. For example, we can use them to understand how species ranges and phenology (e.g. emergence or flowering time) may shift through time, document species invasions, and as a source of genetic material for molecular research. Beyond botanical research, our collections have also inspired students and professors in numerous other disciplines, in addition to members of the public of all ages—for example, UARK has ongoing collaborations with local artists, historians, and anthropologists who are interested in the artistic

beauty and cultural significance of our collections.

Our holdings are the result of all the collectors who have come before us, and this proud botanical legacy and passion for exploration now spans 150 years! UARK is now in the midst of an uptick in plant collection and specimen-

based research. The past two years have been a period of exciting growth for UARK, as we welcomed new staff, volunteers, post-docs, and students. We currently support numerous specimen-based research projects and are adding to our collections through exciting field expeditions in Brazil, Italy, and locally in Arkansas!

To better serve students at the University of Arkansas, we have added three new courses to our botanical curriculum:

**Plant Science (10301L, 10303):** This course covers basic plant structure, growth, development, physiology, genetics, ecology, and a brief survey of plant groups. (Instructor: Latvis)

## **Taxonomy of Flowering**

**Plants (41074, 51074):** This course covers the identification, evolutionary history, nomenclature, and classification of the most common plant families in Arkansas. Graduate credit satisfies requirements for federal placement. (Instructor: Latvis)

**Dendrology (41174, 51174):** This course focuses on the morphology, classification, geographic distribution, and ecology of woody plants in the southeast, with a primary focus on Arkansas. (Instructor: Ogle)

In collaboration with the School of Art, UARK is part of



*PhD student Jenna Miladin (center) providing a tour of the UARK herbarium during an art-in-collections public outreach event earlier this year. Photo by Maribeth Latvis.*



the Prairie Pedagogy Research Group, an interdisciplinary group of artists, educators, scientists, Indigenous knowledge holders, and sustainability professionals interested in learning from, creating with, conserving, and restoring the Oak Knoll, a small remnant prairie and oak savanna adjacent to Cato Springs Research Center on the University of Arkansas campus in Fayetteville. Spearheaded by Jean Schmitt MFA, assistant professor in School of Art at the U of A, the group designs curricula to allow students to experience the grassland as a “megadiverse ecosystem that connects not only natural systems, but also researchers, sustainability professionals, and caretakers.” UARK has co-developed educational activities, including herbarium tours to introduce specimens as a medium to convey time, history, culture, and form, field trips to the Oak Knoll, guest lectures, and educational print materials about the grassland.

### Join Us for the Celebration!

In celebration of the past, present, and future of the University of Arkansas Herbarium, we are planning several events scheduled for **early November 2025**. These will include a research symposium, family-friendly events, and a party in Fayetteville. If you are interested in joining us for these festivities, please stay tuned for a list of scheduled events (likely early Fall, as our planning progresses). We will post the event to the [UARK Herbarium's website](https://www.uarkherbarium.org/) and on our social media channels (@uarkherbarium). We hope you will make plans to join us!



*University of Arkansas School of Art students in Caite Ramos' Form and Space class draw inspiration from herbarium specimens. Photo by Jennifer Ogle.*



*Students in Taxonomy of Flowering Plants conducting a biodiversity survey at Mill Branch Park in Goshen, Arkansas. Photo by Maribeth Latvis.*

## DON'T FORGET ABOUT ANPS MERCH!

*Mugs, T-shirts, and sweatshirts.*

<https://www.bonfire.com/>  
(Search Arkansas Native Plant Society)





# OCANPS News

by Sue Hubbard



**Morgan Russell and Samantha Heller (right) look for spring flowers on the trail toward Steel Creek. Photo by Sue Hubbard.**

Our first field trip of the season was on Saturday, March 22. We met at the Ponca Low Water Bridge and our leaders, Samantha Heller (ANPS Treasurer) and Morgan Russell (graduate student at the U of A), led us up the trail towards Steel Creek. The 12 people on the trip got to enjoy a beautiful spring day and, although we did not make it to Steel Creek, we enjoyed many spring wildflowers. They included Ozark Trillium (*Trillium ozarkanum*), Cleft Phlox (*Phlox bifida*), Spring Beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), Toothwort (*Cardamine concatenata*), Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), Common Violet (*Viola sororia*), both White and Yellow Trout Lilies (*Erythronium albidum* and *E. rostratum*) and Dutchman's Britches



**Morgan Russell (right) shows the group a plant on the trail to Steel Creek. Photo by Sue Hubbard.**

(*Dicentra cucullaria*).

Dr. Fred Paillet, adjunct professor at the University of Arkansas, had agreed to lead a walk focusing on Ozark Chinquapin (*Castanea ozarkensis*) on Saturday, April 5, but it was cancelled due to a storm. As we approached the rescheduled date of Saturday, April 26, the weather was also iffy. It was good we decided to go ahead, as the rain held off for our field trip and 13 people attended. We met at the Bear Hollow Trailhead, which is part of the Back 40 trail system in Bella Vista. Dr. Paillet started by showing us specimens of Chinquapin wood and spoke about the effect Chestnut Blight (*Cryphonectria parasiti-*



**Above: Fred Paillet talks about Ozark Chinquapin. Right: Ozark Chinquapin log. Photos by Sue Hubbard.**



ca) has had on Chinquapins in this area. He then took us on the trail to see areas where Chinquapins were resprouting. We even found nut casings with seeds

from last year. We then drove a short distance down the road and re-entered the woods to see several logs from Chinquapins that were still recognizable despite, in all likelihood, having lain there since the 1950's. Along the way we stopped to appreciate spring wildflowers such as a large display of Wild Hyacinth (*Camassia scilloides*),



Fire pink (*Silene virginica*), Bird's Foot and Common violet (*Viola pedata* and *V. sororia*), Rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*), Yellow Star-grass (*Hypoxis hirsuta*), Cornsalad (*Valerianella radiata*) and Two-flowered Dwarf Dandelion (*Krigia biflora*).

Long time OCANPS member Ginny Masullo organized a trip on Thursday, May 8 to the Rob and Melani Walton Preserve in Garfield. She arranged for Chas McCoy, Watershed Specialist for The Nature Conservancy, to talk about how TNC manages the property. This included a large scale project to remove non-native blackberries. Doug Zollner, ecologist for Arkansas TNC, helped out with plant identification. Chas led the 19 people who attended on a tour of a section of the property including a meadow area (where the blackberry removal occurred) and woodlands. Along the way we saw Ozark Mock Orange (*Philadelphus pubescens*), Blue Toadflax (*Nuttallanthus canadensis*) and resprouts of Ozark Chinquapin (*Castanea ozarkensis*).



**Chas McCoy talks to the group at the Rob and Melani Walton Preserve. Photo by Sue Hubbard.**

I don't know if it was the beautiful day in the mid 70's, the chance to learn from Jennifer Ogle (collections manager at the UARK Herbarium) or the opportunity to visit Baker Prairie. Maybe it was a combination of all three, but 30 people showed up for our field trip to Baker Prairie in Harrison on Saturday, May 31. Deb O'Donnell, an UARK Herbarium volunteer and trip co-leader, provided participants with a sheet allowing them to play plant bingo as we strolled through the prairie. Doug Zoller, ecologist for Arkansas TNC, provided plant identification for those who could not get close enough to hear Jennifer. We took the trail on the east side of the prairie because that side was burned late last year. Plants seen included pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), Green Eyes (*Berlandiera betonicifolia*), Goat's Rue (*Tephrosia virginiana*), Bush's Poppy-Mallow (*Callirhoe bushii*), Carolina

Rose (*Rosa carolina*) and Carolina Larkspur (*Delphinium carolinianum*). We even found one Compass Plant (*Silphium laciniatum*) which had already put out a bloom.



**Baker Prairie in bloom. W.O.W.!!! Photo by Scott Simon.**



**Jennifer Ogle co-leading the tour on Baker Prairie. Photo by Scott Simon.**



**The group at Baker Prairie. Photo by Scott Simon.**



# Botany News (Arkansas and Northern Louisiana)

High-bush blueberry (*Vaccinium virgatum*) has been treated as a separate species and also lumped into the *Vaccinium corymbosum* group. Fritsch and his colleagues looked at morphological characters, ploidy level, and DNA and found support for its taxonomic status as a recognized species! **Fritsch, P.W., A.A. Crowl, and P.S. Manos. 2025. *Vaccinium virgatum* (Ericaceae): a species to be recognized. J. Bot. Res. Inst. Texas 18(2): 293–309. 2024. <https://doi.org/10.17348/jbrit.v18.i2.1366>.**



**Peter Fritsch collecting *Vaccinium* sp. in the Ouachita National Forest. Photo by Virginia McDaniel.**

Kees and colleagues present a preliminary taxonomic treatment of the blue-flower eryngo (*Eryngium integrifolium* complex). They recognize five species, with two additional taxa treated at varietal rank using morphometric analysis and ecological and biogeographic evidence. **Kees, J.C., A.S. Weakley, and D.B. Poindexter. 2024. Towards a revision of the *Eryngium integrifolium* complex (Apiaceae). Phytoneuron 2024-70: 1–25. Published 11 November 2024. ISSN 2153 733X.**

Grasslands are one of the most endangered plant communities on the planet, but saving them gets much less attention than “Saving the Rainforest.” The first step in saving them is knowing where they are, no matter how small. In this paper, Kelley and Bordelon document a remarkable number of species (250) in a 0.6 hectare roadside *prairie remnant* in Webster Parish, northwestern Louisiana. Three species are state-tracked, 7 others are of unique conservation concern, and 19 represent parish records. **Kelley, J.M. and M. Bordelon. 2024. Flora and notes for a roadside prairie scrap in northwest Louisiana. Phytoneuron 2024- 59: 1–21. Published 8 August 2024. ISSN 2153 733X.**

Ohlsson and colleagues documented the plant taxa and forest structure in a *pine-hardwood forest* at Eddie D. Jones Park, Caddo Parish, Louisiana, where they identified 181 species. Few quality remnants of this forest type remain in the region and documenting their species composition is important. **Ohlsson, R., M.H. MacRoberts, B.R. MacRoberts, and J.M. Kelley. 2024. Floristics and forest structure of a pine-hardwood slope forest at Eddie D. Jones Park, Caddo Parish, northwestern Louisiana. Phytoneuron 2024-77: 1–18. Published 11 November 2024. ISSN 2153 733X.**

Raymond and several generations of botanists worked to develop an annotated, *vouchered checklist* for a 65 acre park in Caddo Parish, LA. Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park house at least 633 species including several rare plants. **Raymond, L.R., R.D. Thomas, B. and M.H. MacRoberts, and J.M. Kelley. 2024. Documented and annotated checklist of the vascular flora of the Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Park, Caddo Parish, Louisiana. Phytoneuron 2024-40: 1–30. Published 6 June 2024. ISSN 2153 733X.**

Serviss and Kratz continue to document the movement of invasive species in Arkansas. In this paper they note that creeping lily-turf (*Liriope spicata*) is rapidly expanding its range but other species of lily-turf (*Liriope*) and mondo-grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus*) are also expanding. **Serviss, B.E. and J.R. Kratz. 2024. New distributional records of liriopogons (*Liriope* and *Ophiopogon*, Ruscaceae) in Arkansas. Phytoneuron 2024-78: 1–40. Published 11 November 2024. ISSN 2153 733X.**



**Prairie on the side of Highway 27 in Arkansas. Photo by Virginia McDaniel.**



# Honoring Member Accomplishments



**Leslie Patrick giving Sid Vogelpohl the Dwight Munson Moore Award. Photo by Michael Weatherford.**

During the Spring 2024 Meeting on behalf of ANPS, Leslie Patrick presented Sid Vogelpohl with the Dwight Munson Moore Award for his outstanding accomplishment in authoring the ANPS Know Your Native articles for over 10 years. In case you don't know, there is a treasure trove of over 220 articles on the ANPS website, called Know Your Natives. The articles feature native plants - beautiful wildflowers, trees, shrubs, vines, and ferns. Sid and Jeanette Vogelpohl take photos of native plants from their own gardens and property in Paris to include in the articles. Sid researches and writes the articles, which are then technically reviewed by professional botanists before being published and archived on the ANPS website.

Sid documents plant growth throughout the year, and takes strikingly beautiful and detailed photos of every part of the plant, from underground roots and tubers to stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits. The articles cover the history behind plant names, plant distribution, preferred habitat, and details about each plant's characteristics and growth habits, faunal associations, and related plant species.

*Dr. Dwight Munson Moore was an Arkansas botanist and college professor who authored many scientific publications, but perhaps his best-known publication is *Trees of Arkansas*. The ANPS Dwight Moore Award is given in Dr. Moore's honor to persons with outstanding achievement in either research or publication on Arkansas botany. Past recipients include Edwin B. Smith, Carl Hunter, Carl Slaughter, and Jennifer Ogle.*



**Eric Fuselier presented MaryAnn King with the Eric and Milanne Sundell Award. Photo by ANPS Member.**

During the Spring 2025 Meeting on behalf of ANPS, Eric Fuselier presented MaryAnn King (photo above, right) with the Eric and Milanne Sundell Award. MaryAnn was put forward by Eric Sundell, who wrote in his nomination letter:

*MaryAnn has provided strong, energetic support for our organization since its early years—back in the last century! She's been an active participant of both the statewide Society and the Northwest Chapter. She was our Memorial Awards Officer for several years. She is still (as far as I know) one of our auctioneers. But most importantly, as owner and operator of Pine Ridge Gardens, she pioneered gardening with Arkansas' native plants—and did so at a time before other sources of natives were commercially available, when the only natives in our gardens were redbuds and flowering dogwoods, when Wild Ones was decades in the future... MaryAnn single-handedly built a foundation for native gardening in Arkansas. Through the sale of a wide choice of native plants as well as contributions of natives to our annual auctions and organized field trips to her nursery in London, she allowed ANPS members to grow the plants we loved and admired on our field trips. And throughout her years of hard work and commercial success, she remained a stalwart ANPS contributor. She's been an inspiration to our membership. ANPS and Pine Ridge Gardens have been like siblings all their lives—they grew up together, intertwined like, say, muscadine and yellow jessamine.*

Hear, hear, Eric!



# Upcoming Field Trips

## Arkansas River Trail with Eric Sundell

Saturday, October 21, 2025, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**2801 River Rd, North Little Rock, AR 72114-3954**

Meeting Location: [Riverview Skateboard Park](#) on River Road in North Little Rock (34.769117, -92.296507)

Join Eric Sundell and John Simpson for a pleasant fall walk along the River Trail. It is a spectacular site between the river and the high cliffs to the north, and it's loaded with giant trees—cottonwood, American elm, green ash and box elder. And possibly woodchucks! This is an easy walk and will be on a trail.



*Theo Witsell and Eric Sundell introduce the group to Lorange Creek Natural Area, Spring ANPS Meeting, 2025. Photo by Jennifer Ogle.*

### Directions:

From I-40, take exit 152 or 152B (if west-bound) for MacArthur Blvd. (AR-365) toward Pike Ave. Head South on MacArthur Blvd. and keep R at the fork to stay on MacArthur Blvd. In roughly 0.9mi., turn W (R) on W 18th St. At intersection of W18th. St. and Crutcher St. (5-way intersection), slight right onto Fort Roots Dr. Stay left at the fork to remain on Fort Roots Dr. In 1,000ft., keep L at

the fork. Take next R onto Paul Duke Dr. then W (L) onto River Rd. Take immediate L and park in the lot for the Riverview Skateboard Park.

## Winter Botany Walk at Smith Creek Preserve

February 28, 2026, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Smith Creek Preserve Trailhead (35.934519, -93.385796) <https://maps.app.goo.gl/qc47kzgQ52fJBAQK6>

Join Jennifer Ogle and Andrew Ruegsegger of the University of Arkansas Herbarium on a winter botany tour of The Nature Conservancy's Smith Creek Preserve, a 1,300+ acre natural area in Newton County that protects the largest colony of Indiana bats in the state. During the walk we'll see many species of trees and shrubs in their winter condition, including beech, umbrella magnolia, cucumber magnolia, and Ozark witch hazel. Bring water and a sack lunch, wear sturdy boots, and dress for winter weather.

Level of Difficulty: The trail is rated as moderate to strenuous and is 1.5-2 miles round trip.

Directions: Meet at the Smith Creek Preserve parking area, located about 3 miles south of the Boxley Valley Church on Hwy 21. More information about Smith Creek Preserve and a map with directions to the property can be found on The Nature Conservancy's website at <https://www.nature.org/.../places.../smith-creek-preserve/>.

Please note: In case of inclement weather, this trip will be canceled, and an announcement will be made on the ANPS and UARK Facebook pages.

## Spring Walk on Rich Mountain

April 10, 2026, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: [Queen Wilhelmina Lodge](#) on top of Rich Mountain (34.6840639, -94.3704817). Meet in the parking lot outside the lodge.

Come spend a (most likely) misty spring morning in the Ouachita Oak Montane Forest on top of the second highest peak in Arkansas with Jennifer Ogle (University of Arkansas Herbarium) and Virginia McDaniel (Forest Service botanist). Rich Mountain is known for its sky island forest of stunted oak woodlands and rich herbaceous vegetation. Trail will be rugged and rocky so bring some sturdy walking shoes.

**RSVP** Virginia McDaniel at 828-545-2062.



# 2025 Fall Treasurer's Report

2025 through 31 July				
Cash, 1 January 2025				
	2025 Budget	2025 Actual (as of 31 July)	Σ	Proposed 2026 Budget
<b>Income</b>				
Membership Dues	\$4,500.00	\$2,225.82		\$4,500.00
Meeting Registration	\$1,500.00	\$470.00		\$1,500.00
Silent Auction	\$1,000.00	\$785.00		\$1,000.00
Merchandise Sales	\$1,000.00	\$189.00		\$1,000.00
Contributions & Grants	\$2,000.00	\$6,412.29		\$2,000.00
	\$10,000.00	\$10,082.11	\$10,082.11	\$10,000.00
<b>Expenditures</b>				
ANPS.Org	\$190.00	\$615.00		\$99.00
Bulk Mail*	\$320.00	-		-
Claytonia	\$2,400.00	\$369.60		\$200.00
Directory	\$1,500.00	-		-
Memorial Awards, Grants, and Scholarships	\$10,000.00	\$2,500.00		\$8,000.00
Garden Grants	\$1,000.00	-		\$1,000.00
Meeting Expenses	\$1,000.00	\$422.57		\$1,000.00
Tabling Events	-	-		-
Webinar Series	\$163.00	-		\$163.00
Merchandise Purchases	\$500.00	-		\$500.00
Supplies (Postage, PayPal fees, etc.)	\$300.00	\$170.81		\$300.00
	\$17,373.00	\$4,077.98	\$4,077.98	\$11,262.00
<b>Cash, as of 31 July</b>			<b>\$18,121.25</b>	

*\*This fee was successfully refunded on 5/19, since ANPS will no longer be mailing Claytonia in bulk.*

Respectfully submitted by Samantha Heller, Treasurer



# Botanizing the Parking Lot

by Virginia McDaniel

In true Sundell-the-field-trip-leader fashion, Jennifer Ogle (University of Arkansas Herbarium collections manager) and Virginia McDaniel (Southern Research Station botanist) led a plant walk that did not leave the parking lot. This was partly because the road ended in a bayou with alligator infested waters and the only trails in the area required a boat, but also because this was one diverse parking lot!



**Bottomland slough with bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*).**  
*Photo by Virginia McDaniel.*

Cut-off Creek Ravines Natural Area contains two ravines that start in upland pine-oak forest and empty into mixed oak and beech forest that transitions to bottomland hardwood forest. This 376-acre natural area is managed by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission and is part of a larger Cut-off Creek Wildlife Management Area that is comanaged with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. This area conserves Coastal Plain Forest and the transition from Coastal Plain to Mississippi Alluvial Plain Forest.

As one of the walk leaders is a co-author of Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Arkansas, we were obviously going to talk about woody plants. Jennifer did not disappoint. The classic bottomland species, bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), was hard to miss and its feathery leaves were gorgeous silhouetted against the deep blue sky. We saw swamp chestnut oak (*Quercus michauxii*), which has

leaves that are downy to the touch on the lower surface, a character important for distinguishing it from a similar looking species, chinquapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*). And yes, habitat was another big clue. swamp chestnut oak, as the name suggests, is found along moist to wet, well-drained bottomland, floodplains and along streams, while chinquapin oak is a more upland species often found in limestone-rich, mixed deciduous forests. Other nice bottomland species included “our most hydric oak” as Eric Sundell calls overcup oak (*Quercus lyrata*), cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*), and water locust (*Gleditsia aquatica*).

The cul-de-sac area of the parking lot and adjacent woods were relatively open, allowing for a number of forbs and graminoids to thrive. A flowering milkweed is always a star, but purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*) was a shooting star on a dark night. Vibrant! Several species that we don’t see much in the mountains and must prefer the coastal plain are Boykin’s cluster pea (*Lackeya multiflora*), Carolina wild petunia (*Ruellia caroliniensis*), coffee-bean (*Sesbania herbacea*) and lance-leaf water-willow (*Justicia ovata* var. *lanceolata*). A grass had us stumped during our scouting but turned out to be Arkansas manna grass (*Glyceria septentrionalis* var. *arkansana*) - a county record! Another treat for us was not a rare plant, but a plant we rarely see - Rattle-weed



**Purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*).** *Photo by Virginia McDaniel.*



(*Astragalus canadensis*). I learned this genus in the deserts of the western US, where there are a million species (not really, but there are a lot!), all small in stature with a muted gray appearance from the hairs that cover the leaves to conserve every bit of moisture. Many of these *Astragalus* species have narrow ranges of just a few counties. In comparison, rattle-weed is gigantic, green, and found in nearly every state in the US, with Arkansas near the southern edge. Common plants can be exciting to find when you are near the edge of their range.

We kept the parking lot vibe going on our drive back to town when we stopped briefly to walk across the Wolf Creek bridge, where we saw several more bottomland species from the comfort of the road, including Carolina ash (*Fraxinus caroliniana*), swamp-privet (*Forestiera acuminata*), American wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*), and swamp red maple (*Acer rubrum* var. *drummondii*).



**Afternoon Cut-off Creek Ravines Natural Area group—perhaps the youngest average age of any recent ANPS field trip. Camera positioned by Jenna Miladin.**

## Remembering Milanne Sundell

The Arkansas Native Plant Society lost a member and dear friend this year. Milanne Sundell died in her home on January 22, 2025 surrounded by her family.

Milanne was born in Seymour, IN and graduated from Long Beach High School on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and from Millsaps College in Jackson, MS. She taught English with the Peace Corps (1965-67) in Tunisia, North Africa where she met her husband, Eric, on a desert camel trip out of Douz. They raised their family of three sons (Michael, Jack and Joe) in Monticello, AR where Eric taught Botany at the University of Arkansas.

Milanne was a long time member of the Arkansas Native Plant Society and constant presence at meetings who, along with renowned trip leader Eric, built a solid foundation for the Arkansas Native Plant Society. Her welcoming spirit, interesting conversations, kindness, and hard work kept the organization going and made all of us want to return for more.

Because of the Sundells' dedication and commitment to the Arkansas Native Plant Society, the board created a new Award in 2023 in their honor – The Eric and Milanne Sundell Award. As Isaac Ogle says - "They are the mortar that holds us all together" and that mortar is solid. We are thankful for our time together and miss her dearly.



**Milanne and her son Jack with goats at Heifer Ranch in Perryville. Photo by Eric Sundell.**

*We miss her loving heart, her brilliant, generous, never-selfish mind with that extraordinary memory, her happy spirit. "A merry heart does good like a medicine." - from the obituary for Milanne Sundell.*



## President's Message

We are in the midst of heat and more heat- a good time to hunker down (if you can) and ride it out until things cool off a bit. Reality is different though - I, for one, don't slow down in the summer because that's when I get my most serious planting and outside project "itches." I suspect this to be almost universal amongst our membership whether from our passions, interests, and/or jobs that take us outside. It will be frigid cold soon enough, so we enjoy the growing plants while we can!

Our President-Elect (Andrew Rueggeger), has planned out a wonderful fall meeting in Harrison. We'll have the fun live auction so please bring items to bring in funds for grants and scholarships! With canning season strongly upon us – don't forget that jams, jellies, fruit butters,



*Sarah Geurtz, ANPS President.*

and honey are all popular items – they'll bring in some good money as well as plants, books, art, and photography do!

Art Browning (Vice President) has been working our specifics for the spring and fall meetings in 2026 and I am very excited for those! I probably shouldn't put anything in official writing here but know that the board is excited about them.

I'm looking forward to this fall when I'll learn more new things about plants and nature, and I look forward to seeing all my old friends again!

Warmly,

Sarah Geurtz

ANPS President

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## Arkansas Native Plant Society Membership Application

### Membership Categories

- ☐ \$10 Student
- ☐ \$15 Individual
- ☐ \$20 Supporting
- ☐ \$25 Family
- ☐ \$30 Contributing
- ☐ \$150 Lifetime (age 55+)
- ☐ \$300 Lifetime (under age 55)

- ☐ New Member
- ☐ Renewal
- ☐ Address Change

- ☐ Opt in to receive paper *Claytonia*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this completed form with a check made payable to the Arkansas Native Plant Society to:

Samantha Heller, Treasurer  
8461 Apple Glen  
Rogers, Arkansas 72756

**JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE INSTEAD! Details at [anps.org/join](https://anps.org/join).**





## CLAYTONIA

Virginia McDaniel | Editor  
virginiamcd31@yahoo.com

### Please don't forget to renew your membership!

The calendar year is the membership year.

To renew your membership, fill out the application for membership on page 24 and mail it to the address on the form.

Or renew online at [anps.org/join](https://anps.org/join).

## BOTANIST PETS



*Sleeping dogs and overzealous cats. Photos by Virginia McDaniel.*

Your parent may be a botanist if you use a plant press for your pillow.

*How do you make plant pressing more exciting? Invite a cat and see if you can get the plant in the press without being attacked.*

## 2025 ANPS OFFICERS

### President

Sarah Geurtz  
[sgeurtz.anps@gmail.com](mailto:sgeurtz.anps@gmail.com)

### President-Elect

Andrew Ruegsegger  
[andrewruegsegger8@gmail.com](mailto:andrewruegsegger8@gmail.com)

### Vice President

Art Browning  
[art.browning@gmail.com](mailto:art.browning@gmail.com)

### Nominating Committee Chair

Eric Fuselier  
[anps.programs@gmail.com](mailto:anps.programs@gmail.com)

### Secretary

Greg Rajskey  
[anps.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:anps.secretary@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

Samantha Heller  
[anps.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:anps.treasurer@gmail.com)

### Internet and Social Media Officer

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### Memorial Awards Officer

Jennifer Ogle  
[anps.memorialawards@gmail.com](mailto:anps.memorialawards@gmail.com)

### Membership Officer

Molly Robinson  
[anps.membership@gmail.com](mailto:anps.membership@gmail.com)

### Publisher

Joe Ledvina  
[anps.publisher@gmail.com](mailto:anps.publisher@gmail.com)

### Editor

Virginia McDaniel  
[virginiamcd31@yahoo.com](mailto:virginiamcd31@yahoo.com)



**ARKANSAS NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

Membership, Molly Robinson  
2014 Scott St. APT 3  
Little Rock, AR 72206

**Address Service Requested**

