

# Erythronium

IOWA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2024



# Table of Contents

3

## **Leaves from the President's Notebook**

Like our favorite native species explode in growth in the spring, the INPS is growing too.

5

## **Shooting Star: A Poem**

A testament to one of the most beautiful spring wildflowers in Iowa.

14

## **Upcoming Events**

Check out these opportunities to get outside and contribute to restoration and celebration of Iowa's landscape this spring and summer.

4

## **Pasque Flowers Bloom in the Loess Hills**

A spring field trip to Loess Hills State Forest revealed hundreds of pasque flowers in bloom.

6

## **Mustard Neck**

Like our own personal health, land stewardship practices should focus on addressing the root cause rather than the symptoms.

19

## **Plant. Grow. Fly.**

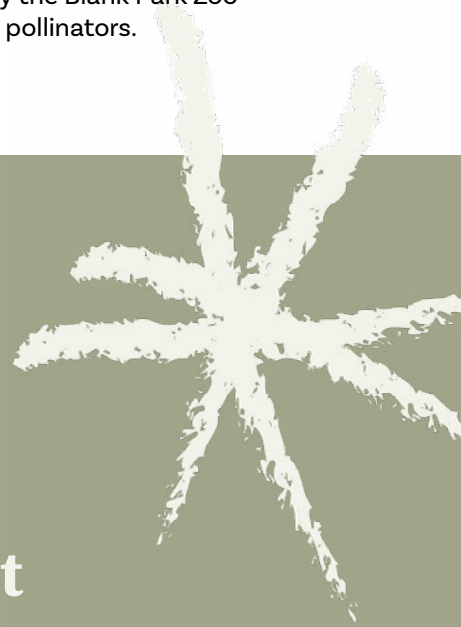
A conservation initiative by the Blank Park Zoo aims to protect our native pollinators.



8

## **Native Plant Spotlight**

Get to know *Anemone caroliniana* and what makes it such a unique native plant species in Iowa.





# Iowa Native Plant Society

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*Erythronium* is the official publication of the Iowa Native Plant Society. It is published twice per year in the winter and spring. If you are interested in writing for *Erythronium* newsletter, please contact us at iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com. Include your idea, photos, relevant experience, and any other information to support your idea.

# Leaves from the President's Notebook

Greetings,

Spring is in the air! Although some days have already felt like summer, it has been nice to enjoy the early blooms, and, as I write this, to receive some needed rain in parts of the state.

I'm happy to share May is, once again, Iowa Wildflower Month! I encourage you all to get out and explore the outdoors for wildflowers this month and throughout the growing season. Please be sure to highlight Iowa Wildflower Month on social media platforms and elsewhere. I am thankful to have already found several flowering species in our woodlands and prairies. A few personal highlights include Carolina anemone (*Anemone caroliniana*), wild pansy (*Viola bicolor*) and ground plum (*Astragalus crassicaupus*).

Speaking of going outside and seeing cool flowers, make sure to check out our events section and website calendar for upcoming field trips and other fun events!

Once again, we have more news to share about the Iowa Native Plant Society! It may be obvious at this point that our newsletter layout has significantly changed. This is one of a few new undertakings we have taken as a board in recent months. It is also important for me to share that after decades of dedicated time, knowledge, passion, and more, Deb Lewis has stepped down as our Newsletter Editor. Don't worry — Deb will still be helping and advising the Iowa Native Plant Society as we move into the future, and we are grateful for her continued time and effort. If you happen to see Deb in the coming months, please give her a hug, a thank you, and/or a high five for the important role she has played in ensuring the success of our newsletter over the years.

The newsletter torch is now in the hands of our newest volunteer, Sydney Upah. We are very excited to have a new team member. Sydney comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and experience in communications, marketing, and design, and she has a passion for outdoor recreation. You can learn more about Sydney and all our board members on our website: [iowanativeplants.org/about](http://iowanativeplants.org/about).

Thank you for supporting the Iowa Native Plant Society. I wish you all a wonderful spring and summer!

**Sarah Nizzi**, President  
Iowa Native Plant Society

LOESS HILLS STATE FOREST

PREPARATION CANYON STATE PARK



## Pasque Flowers Bloom in the Loess Hills

By Dr. Thomas Rosburg

A brisk and chilly northwest wind did not deter about 20 nature enthusiasts from exploring the prairie in the Loess Hills State Forest on Saturday, March 16, a field trip opportunity hosted by the Iowa Native Plant Society.

It was perfect timing to see hundreds of pasque flowers in bloom. The pasque flowers definitely stole the show, but they were not the only plants in bloom. Ground plum (*Astragalus crassicaarpus*), sun sedge (*Carex inops*), pussy toes (*Antennaria neglecta*) and prairie willow (*Salix humilis*) were also taking advantage of the early spring weather. Others, like bastard toadflax (*Comandra umbellata*) and locoweed (*Oxytropis lambertii*), were coming up but not yet in flower.

A short trip into the forest at Preparation Canyon State Park found bloodroot in bloom (*Sanguinaria canadensis*). Other species beginning spring regrowth were Sprengel's sedge (*Carex sprengelii*), Virginia waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*), Cleaver's bedstraw (*Galium aparine*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza*), woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) and garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*).





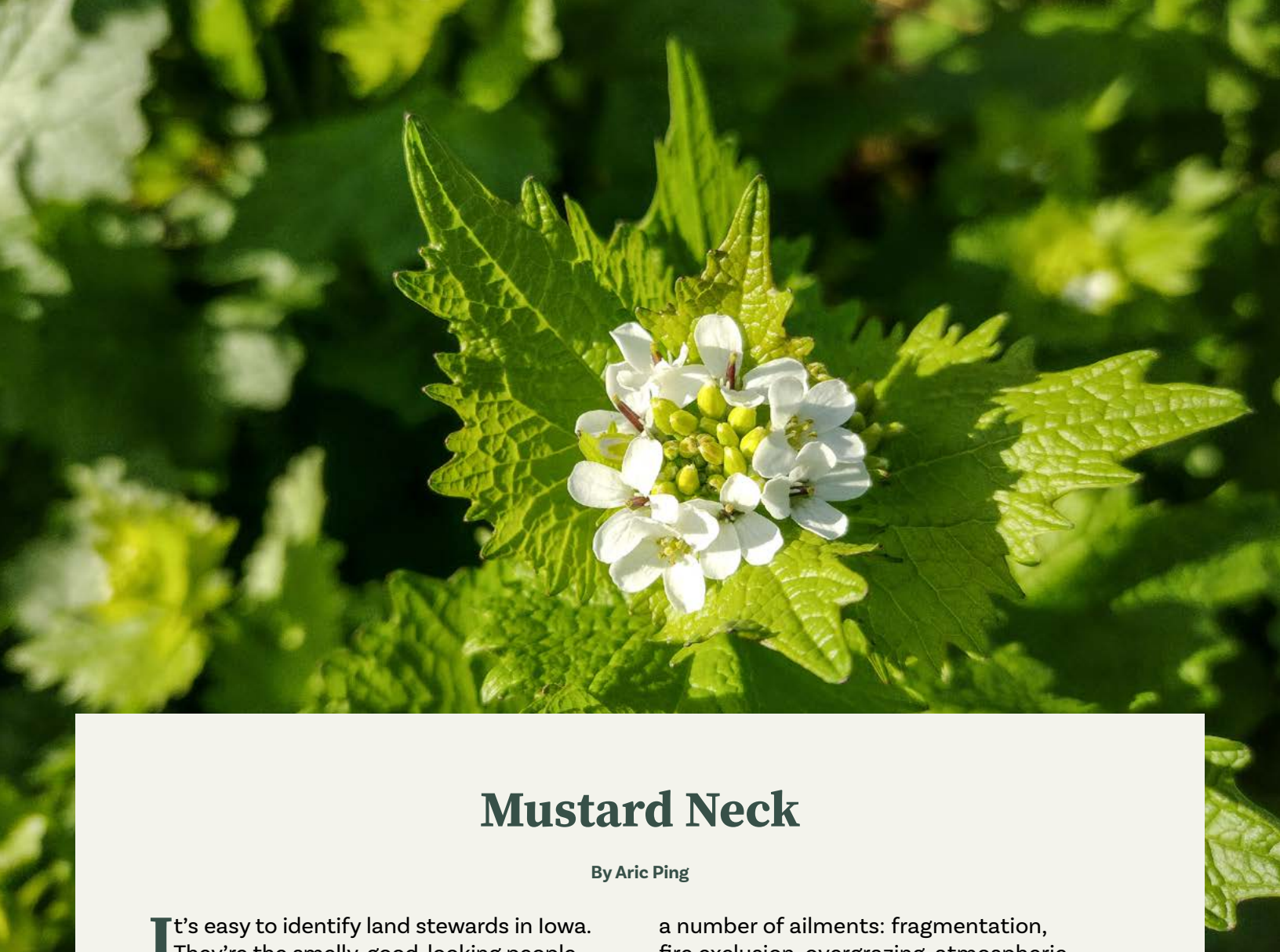


# Shooting Star

By Kara Grady

In Iowa, there's a flower  
Of white and rare rose hues  
Plummeting toward the earth  
And bejeweled with the dews  
Lasting for a single breath  
Of spring's warm glow  
Echoing the stars above  
Of many we don't know  
Christening the prairie  
And upon the wooded hill  
Blanketing the cemetery  
In its peaceful lull  
Petals unfurl into a comet  
Under which bees tremble  
Nourished for another go  
At being the queen bumble  
And as the sun grows higher still  
Warming earth from afar  
Until next year we'll find again  
That earthly shooting star





## Mustard Neck

By Aric Ping

**I**t's easy to identify land stewards in Iowa. They're the smelly, good-looking people with a constant crick in their neck due to the numerous weighty hats they must wear. Our headwear includes that of the ecologist, firefighter, cowboy, sawyer, mechanic, detective, and chemist, among others. If we also worked in space, my boyhood list of dream jobs would be complete. But alas, there is no room atop our heads for astronaut helmets... yet.

There is one hat to rule them all, though. The one that sits atop all others, worn while providing stewardship and restoration – the doctor's hat. Now, you may never have seen a doctor's hat, but trust me, they're very flattering.

When sporting those doctor hats (a fedora/sombrero/Chiquita banana Franken-hat sort of thing), our patient is the Iowa landscape. And oh, does this patient have

a number of ailments: fragmentation, fire exclusion, overgrazing, atmospheric nitrogen deposition, runoff, political agendas, corporate interests, climate change, the totally gray, amorphous conception of what our land even looked like when it was last healthy... oh, and invasive species.

Invasive plants are like infections or illnesses on the land. Some are cancers: Canada thistle, leafy spurge, crown vetch, reed canary grass – frequent recipients of herbicidal chemotherapy. These land-grabbers can run rampant if left unchecked.

Others are not so serious: annual or biennial weeds more akin to a sore back or a head cold. I personally wouldn't recommend chemotherapy for those issues. I'd suggest addressing the underlying problems and habits that are the systemic drivers of the ailments – probably not enough exercise, not enough vitamin D, too much screen time, too

much sitting, wearing too many hats at once.

Changing those habits takes time. It is difficult. Meanwhile, the allure of the quick fix shines bright-white like flowering garlic mustard against a dark, overgrown, fire-starved woodland.

It's right there, we think. We want to race in, pull out the invader, put on a back brace, take some Tylenol, and grab a kleenex. That's okay, but the job isn't finished. Instead of strengthening our core muscles, drinking some orange juice, and getting more sleep, we've just cleaned a wound and left it unstitched. We haven't improved the resiliency of the woodland. We haven't done anything to prevent re-infection. Pulling garlic mustard simply does not address the issue at hand. It is a quick fix which offers little improvement to the proliferating impairments of the interconnected, interdependent processes that contribute to Iowa's woodland's function and health.

Just like our own bone-and-goo-filled sacks of meat, when healthy, She (the land) cycles, grows, reproduces, matures, withers, dies, cycles again. In health She can recover from illness, but recovery, like our own, is predicated upon Her capacity to endure and adapt — Her resilience.

To be resilient, to be healthy, we need the elements that drive health. Except for weirdos like Indian pipe and dodder, plants, at the very basic level, need sunlight and water — two things that Iowa's savannas, woodlands, and forests haven't had in abundance since before white settlement — before fragmentation, before fire suppression, before overgrazing, before the introduction of Eurasian plants.

While records of that landscape were recorded by admittedly suspect Euro-americans, they're always described as

“open” or “sunny.” There is more evidence than those written accounts, too. The General Land Office survey maps and historical aerial photographs available on the Iowa Geographical Map Server provide stark visual evidence for the decade-by-decade tightening grip of shade and shelter across the last bits of Iowa's unplowed land.

In short, the processes that established and maintained our woodlands are gone and the land has taken ill. Some wooded areas have cancers like black locust or tree-of-heaven, while most all have sore backs and sinus infections. The main culprit for these more minor ailments is excessive shade and shelter — an ecological sedentarism, if you will. Our native woodland plants receive less sunlight, struggle for water amidst heightened competition, deal with novel high-humidity

microclimates, and are continually smothered by the nitrogen-rich, flat-lying, fire-phobic leaves of pioneering mesic trees and shrubs. It's no wonder these impaired places are weak enough to be infested by a wimpy biennial like garlic mustard.

**“Pulling garlic mustard simply does not address the issue at hand. It is a quick fix which offers little improvement to the proliferating impairments of the interconnected, interdependent processes that contribute to Iowa's woodland's function and health.”**

So while there is little harm in wearing a back brace or pulling garlic mustard (and one likely needs a back brace after stooping around pulling mustard all day), I think it's important to ask if it wouldn't be better spent thinning the canopy to increase light infiltration, building fire breaks in preparation for reducing leaf litter and stressing fire-phobic species, and addressing the cause and not the symptom to support recovery and build resilience.

The health of the land and the tactics applied to improve it are a direct reflection of our own health and the approaches we take to maintain our bodies. Speaking of which, I really need to do something about this crick in my neck.



# Native Plant Spotlight

*Anemone caroliniana*

By Dr. Thomas Rosburg



If you lean toward Greek mythology as an accurate account of the origin of the genus *Anemone*, then windflowers come from a love affair between Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty, love and sexual desire, and the very handsome Adonis, who at the time was a mortal. Despite a warning from Aphrodite not to wander too far into the forest while hunting and to stay far away from any animal that did not run away from him, the recklessly fearless Adonis marched deep into the forest and was subsequently and tragically killed by large boar. Hearing his screams, Aphrodite raced to his rescue where she found him breathing his last. Kneeling by his side, she sprinkled nectar over the wound and sang gently to him to ease his pain. As he silently passed away, the nectar that Aphrodite sprinkled on Adonis' wound turned the drops of his blood into beautiful red anemones.

On the other hand, if you favor science as an explanation for the presence of *Anemone* species on Earth, then the ancestors of windflowers appeared about 125 million years ago with the evolution of the order Ranunculales. The buttercup family Ranunculaceae, where *Anemone* resides, became established between 92 and 71 million years ago. Primary differentiation of the family took place in Eurasia, with additional important

centers of evolution in North and South America. A general and long-term decrease in temperature, the formation of temperate floras, and the development of alpine environments with the rise of mountains seem to be associated with the emergence of Ranunculaceae. The tribe Anemoneae, within the Ranunculaceae, is dated to 30 million years ago (Angiosperm Phylogeny Website).

There are about 150 species of *Anemone* in the world. One-sixth of them occur in North America. We have 8 species in Iowa, and among them my favorite is *Anemone caroliniana*, the Carolina anemone (Figure 1). Don't get me wrong, seeing pasque flowers brighten the drab prairie in March or the vibrant blooms of hepatica poking through a dreary blanket of forest leaves does my soul good. But finding Carolina anemone makes me feel lucky, like I just hit the jackpot. It is not a species, in my experience, that you can easily find unless you know



Figure 1: Carolina anemone plants



Figure 4: Involucral bracts of Carolina anemone (*Anemone caroliniana*)

where to look. The plants I have seen were 3 to 4 inches tall and easy to miss even when in flower. I have seen vouchers preserving plants that were up to 12 inches tall. They were all from Louisiana and Texas, so perhaps there is ecotypic variation over its large geographic range.

Carolina anemone is a perennial, its shoot arises from a tuber, which is an enlarged, food storage section of a rhizome or underground stem. Most of us probably enjoy eating the tubers known as potatoes. It is known to occur from central Minnesota to the Gulf Coast, and from the central Great Plains to Lake Michigan and as far east as central North Carolina. The heart of its range is an area encompassing eastern Kansas and Oklahoma, southwestern Missouri, and northwestern Arkansas. It is a rare species in Wisconsin,

Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia. It is listed as extirpated in Indiana and South Carolina.

There are records for it from 20 Iowa counties (Figure 2), which makes it the second least common *Anemone* behind *Anemone americana*. It's been observed from northwest to southeast Iowa, on all major landforms except the loess hills and Paleozoic plateau. Those vouchers represent 37 different populations. However, it's important to note that among those records, 4 occurred prior to 1900, 30 date from 1900 to 1980, and only 3 represent a population that can be considered contemporary (observed from 1980 to present). There's a floristic database I have access to that contains plant lists for 166 sites across Iowa, most of them high quality natural areas. None of them show the presence of Carolina anemone. Although it is not currently listed as an imperiled species, it passes the test to be listed as endangered. In Iowa,

Carolina anemone inhabits (or inhabited) sand and gravel prairies and Sioux quartzite outcrops. Similar environments are described for it in other states – dry prairies, barrens, glades, rocky open woodland, gravelly or sandy soils, pastures, and meadows. It is a species adapted to dry, low fertility, high stress environments. In a state where rich, black soil fed much of the vast original prairie landscape, habitat for Carolina anemone was relatively uncommon and special, for example the moisture-deprived gravelly and sandy glacial outwash that underlies the highest elevations at Polk City Cemetery where the accompanying photos were made.

Most descriptions say that Carolina anemone has a single, unbranched, leafless stem, but that is not accurate. The plants are acaulescent, meaning their shoot system lacks a stem. There are 1 to 3, sometimes up to 5, basal leaves with a petiole 3 to 9 centimeters long. The leaves are trifoliate (compound with three leaflets). Leaflets are 1 to 3 cm long and have 2 or 3 lobes. The variation in leaflet size and depth of lobing is shown in Figure 3. What most descriptions identify as a stem is actually the inflorescence, a term for the flowering structure of a plant. Carolina anemone's inflorescence is a scape. In a

Figure 3: Basal leaves of *Carolina anemone*





scape, the peduncle (or stalk of the inflorescence) arises from the base of the plant, is leafless, and supports a solitary flower on its top. All *Anemone* species have one or more pairs or whorls of involucral bracts (not leaves) present. In Carolina anemone a whorl of 3 bracts is positioned below the middle of the scape. These are wedge-shaped, sessile and somewhat fused to one another at their bases. Each has 3 or more small lobes or notches at their tip (Figure 4). The peduncle below the bracts is glabrous (lacks hairs); above the bracts it is softly hairy. The solitary flower is bisexual and like all *Anemone* species (except pasque flower) there are no petals. Instead the colorful perianth is composed of petal-like sepals (Figure 5). Carolina anemone can be distinguished from other Iowa *Anemone* species by its many sepals, at least 10 and as many as 20. The sepals can exhibit an impressive range of color, from white to rose or blue to purple. There are as many as 50 to 60 stamens and many simple pistils in the center of the flower. With just a single flower, it's important to be protective of its contents. The flowers are open for just a few hours from midmorning to midafternoon during April and early May. The ovary of each pistil matures as an achene, a fruit type that is dry (not fleshy), indehiscent (does not open) and single-

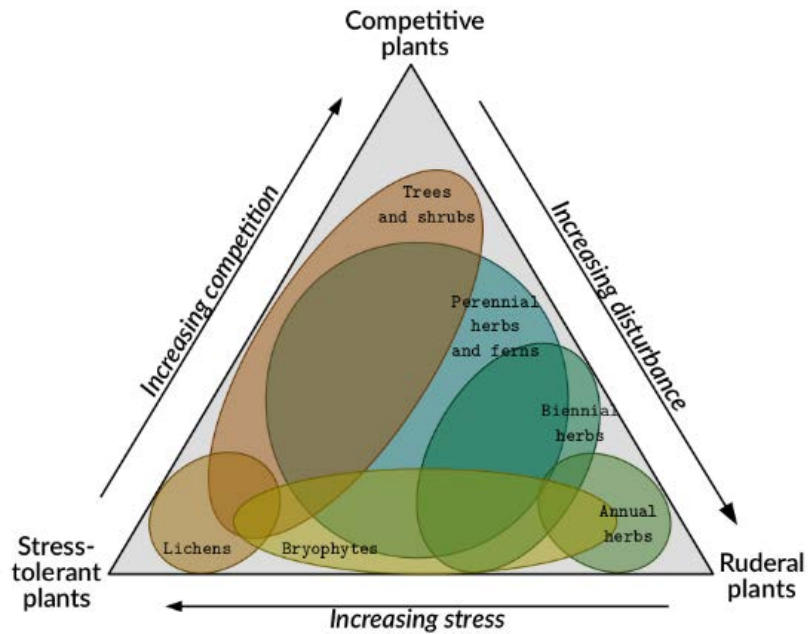


Figure 6: Grime's triangle for plant life history strategies

seeded. Their surface is densely wooly with hairs.

The open, bowl-shaped flowers of *Anemone* are usually considered to be evidence of a more generalist approach to pollination. Nectar and copious amounts of pollen are produced and relatively easy to access. Short-tongue bees, sweat bees, and flies have been observed visiting the flowers. Butterflies and especially beetles are likely visitors. The order Ranunculales is the evolutionary basal group of the eudicots, a classification that replaced the concept of dicots. Rather than the traditional monocot vs dicot classification, all flowering plants are now placed into one of four fundamental

groups – basal angiosperms, magnoliids, eudicots and monocots. Eudicots are the largest group with over half of all flowering plants, over 160,000 species, and familiar to you as the plants with flower parts in fours or fives. As the base of the eudicots, the buttercup order (including *Anemone* species) provides a view 125 million years back in time to the ancestral, first flowers. The oldest, most primitive angiosperm, or flowering plant, currently known lived about 174 million years ago. Thus the buttercups represent 50 million years of evolutionary improvement. Their radial bowl-like shape, large number of sepals, lack of petals, many stamens, and their many separate carpels

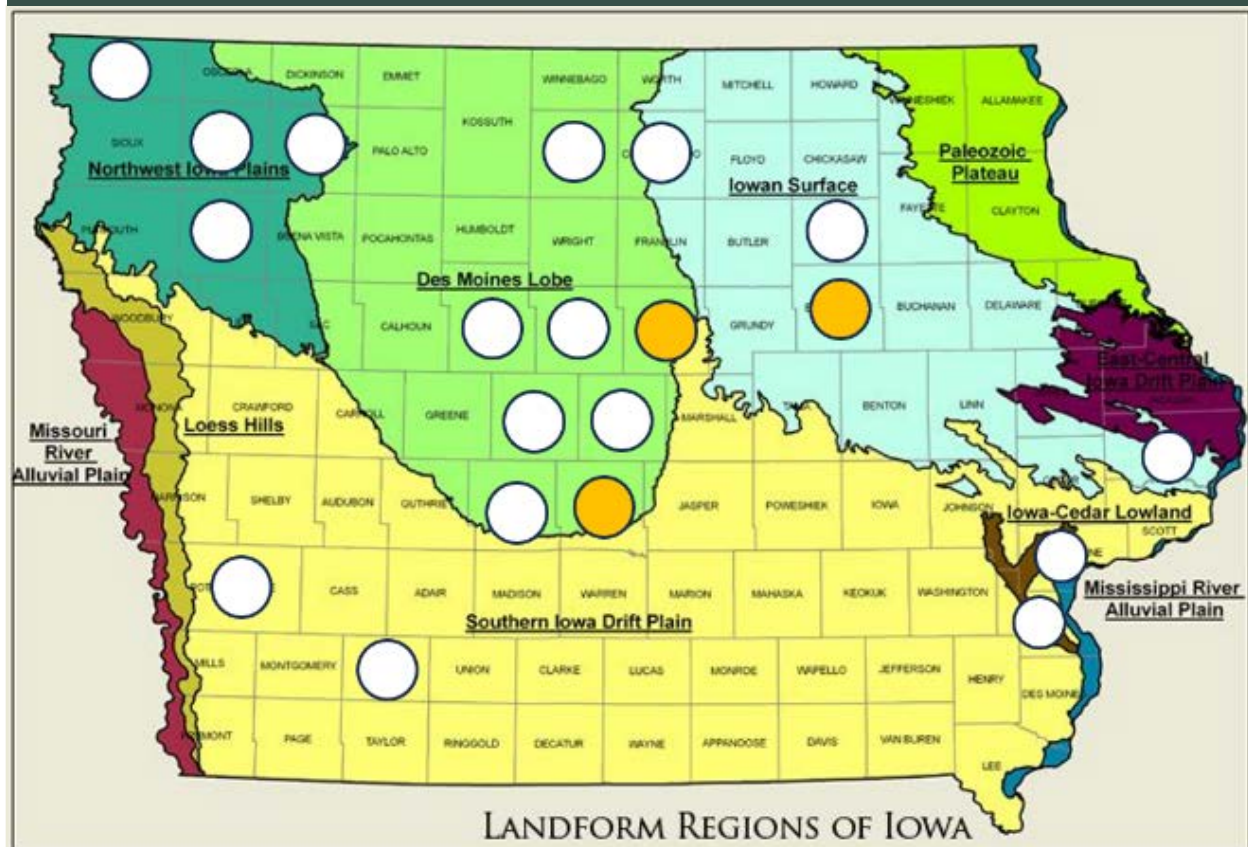
(the female reproductive parts including ovary, style and stigma) characterize a flower still in the early stages of evolution. And what was pollinating those early flowers? Beetles and flies.

Carolina anemone is a great example of an S-selected species; it is a species adapted to stressful or harsh environments. If you have taken a college-level ecology course, you hopefully learned about r and K life history strategies. This model was advanced by Robert MacArthur and E.O. Wilson in 1967. Species that are r-selected are

generally smaller, mature at an earlier age, live shorter lives, have high higher numbers of offspring, provide less parental care, and are favored by earlier successional, less competitive environments than are K-selected species. Insects and fish are r-selected; birds and mammals are K-selected. What you may not have learned is that while this model applies well to animals, it does not fit plants very well. A better model for plants was presented by J.P. Grime in 1977 and is known as Grime's triangle (Figure 6).

All organisms allocate energy to one of three options – growth, maintenance, or reproduction. Grime's triangle identifies those options as three plant life history strategies. Species adapted to high resource/high disturbance environments are R-selected or ruderal species with a high allocation to reproduction. Those adapted to high productivity/high competition environments are C-selected species that favor allocation to growth and competition. A species in a high stress environment (xeric, infertile, overexposure,

Figure 2: Historic (white) and contemporary (orange) records for Carolina anemone in Iowa





acidic) does best to allocate energy to maintenance and is S-selected. Cacti are a familiar S-selected species. Most plant species do not live in the corners of Grime's triangle, rather they are a mixture of two or three strategies (Figure 6). Carolina anemone may be 75% S-selected and 25% R-selected. There are occasional records for it from roadsides, grazed pastures, railroad rights-of-way and cemeteries, environments characterized by some disturbance or perturbation. Given its small size and basal leaves, grazing should be favorable for it as would mowing or haying. It is true that for some species, their presence in a roadside or the lawn of a cemetery befits their proclivity for disturbance. But that is not necessarily true for all species that might be found in those environments. Some roadsides and mown cemeteries may have been carved from a native ecosystem and what we see are native plant populations that have survived, perhaps more so because of characteristics that make them S-selected rather than as a response to disturbance. The importance of Grime's triangle as model of plant life history strategies is demonstrated very well by Carolina anemone. Without the concept of S-selection, it would likely be characterized as an r-selected species in the MacArthur-Wilson



model. That would imply it has weedy tendencies and that it is favored by anthropogenic disturbance. If that were true, then why are there so few contemporary populations? Why have most of you reading this probably never seen it? Carolina anemone is certainly not a low conservative weedy species. Iowa has given it a coefficient of conservatism of 7 (with medium confidence due to the need for more information about its ecology). It is also a 7 in Missouri, an 8 in the Dakotas, a 9 in Illinois, and a 10 in Louisiana. Kansas is an outlier with a coefficient of 5. Still there is good agreement that Carolina anemone is a conservative species, a species that 70 to 100% of the time occurs in a mostly pristine natural ecosystem. That's why finding it is like winning the jackpot. It is a prairie gem!

There is an alternative Greek myth for the origin of anemone plants. In this story Zephyr, the god of the west wind, was infatuated with an irresistible nymph named Anemone. Zephyr's wife Chloris (or Flora in Roman mythology and the goddess of flowers and spring) was rightfully angered by this so she punished Anemone by turning her into a flower that would only open when touched by Boreas, the bad-tempered god of the north wind. Hence Anemone species are the "daughters of the wind" or "windflowers."



# Doolittle Prairie Consequences

By Jake Landers

**I**t was about 10 acres of land in Story County, Iowa that needed some drainage before it could be plowed. Some would call it a Pothole Prairie. Dorrel Doolittle, the owner, farmed and operated a dairy herd on adjacent land, and arranged with a neighbor to cut hay on the area every fall.

The area was part of the land settled by the Doolittle Family in 1855, which was never put into cultivation because of its wetness. A detailed botanical study of the area was published in the Iowa Academy of Science in 1999 by Paul R. Wetzel, William R. Norris, and Kevin M. Lyles.

I was looking for a piece of the original prairie to show my ecology classes at Iowa State University in the early 1960s, and I was shown it by somebody familiar with the area, maybe Professor George Knaphus or Steve Lekwa, a student who later on showed me another part of the prairie pothole area. I don't remember the circumstances. It was not very impressive, but it was the real thing, although a bit wet, and it was convenient to Ames.

I visited with Mr. Doolittle several times to work out an agreement and see if he was interested in selling or leasing it to the university. He didn't want to sell or lease it, but he was agreeable on our using it for class purposes, for hand-gathering seed, and burning it after it was hayed for the class to get experience burning.. The class burned it once, tried a second time when it was too wet. Then I abandoned trips to Doolittle and began using the planted prairie area in Ledges State Park which was more suitable for classes.

But my group of students did not forget about it. Native prairie seeds were not available commercially, so they had to collect them wherever they could find prairie remnants. Paul Christensen began his graduate work with me in the 1960s working with seedlings and transplants of many prairie species, many seeds collected from Doolittle Prairie. Then he went on to Cornell College where he continued his work on prairies.

Terry Heiner studied seeding and transplanting using a grant from Iowa





Department of Transportation trying to establish native plants in roadsides and rest areas instead of non-native plants. Along with Daryl Smith's work at the University of Northern Iowa on prairie establishment, this lead into the Iowa Roadway Trust Fund which became important in the 1990s on vegetation management.

For several years in the 1960s and 1970s I had a Nesbitt grass drill that we used on several county roadsides and county park areas with seed purchased from out of state because that was the only place they were available. The drill was purchased for me by the ISU Farm Service Agency and stayed with the Iowa County Conservation Boards when I left Iowa. It was used for many years after I was gone according to Steve Lekwa, Story County Conservation Board, planting seed through central Iowa, hopefully from local sources, including Doolittle Prairie.

In the 1970s, local prairie seeds were very scarce, and there was considerable interest in reestablishing native prairie in Iowa from seed grown close to home. Members of The Nature Conservancy in Iowa were speaking out on searching for prairie remnants, raising money to purchase them, and we continued gathering seeds by hand.

In the fall of 1978, Carl Kurtz proposed to harvest the seeds from Doolittle prairie with a new Allis Chalmers combine. We paid Dorrel \$1,000, which he was getting for the hay crop, and Carl and Steve Lekwa proceeded to harvest the seeds that October. It was bulky and full of trash. Carl divided it into ten half-bushel parcels and offered them at \$100 each. I took one, Carl took one, and Dennis Black with the Jasper County Conservation Board took six, Randy and Tomma Lou Maas took one, and Steve Lekwa, with the Story County Conservation Board, took the tenth. It was a successful investment and yielded a lot of trashy seed from a local source. My wife, Helen, was thankful I got my "frivolous" investment back.

Carl took his seed and mine and added to his prairie in 1979 that he had started on

his family farm in earlier years from hand collected seeds. With his, Dennis Black established many acres of prairie parks in Jasper County. Steve Lekwa planted his near the lake in McFarland Park, and Maas gave theirs to Don Farrar who planted it on his property. All this was a considerable increase in established prairie plantings in Iowa with local seed.

In 1979, I left Iowa for a position with Texas A&M Extension, and I was out of the picture.

I visited Carl's farm in 1988, and was amazed at the progress he had made on establishing a prairie in 10 years from seed from Doolittle Prairie and hand collected from other sources. In 2022, I was back in Iowa to stay. One summer day I sat in the middle of Carl's 80 acres of tall grass prairie as close to the original composition as we could guess, transfixed with its natural beauty and richness, mostly derived from the seeds of Doolittle's ten acres. It was good to condense 50 years to see what time and Carl's efforts had accomplished.

Doolittle Prairie had continued as a teaching prairie in the 1970s with Cele Burnett taking walking tours of the area, then Steve Lekwa, then Lloyd Crim taking groups on monthly tours for many years, then Tom Rosburg, while still owned by the Doolittle family.

Carl Kurtz and the Natural Heritage Foundation have an agreement to continue harvesting seeds for sale as bulk prairie seed extensively used for roadsides, park areas, and commercial landscaping areas where individual species are not needed, but the overall dominance of prairie species is desired. The prairie is properly managed with prescribed burning and weed removal.

Adjacent areas, originally acquired by the Doolittle family in 1855, have been purchased by the local conservation board and are available for public use. One part is designated Doolittle Prairie State Preserve.

When you add it up, quite some consequences for 10 acres of Iowa prairie too wet to plow.

# Upcoming Events

## Woodland Tour at Macbride Nature Recreation Area

### Event Details

The Macbride Nature Recreation Area is offering an exclusive native plant tour led by the University of Iowa's MNRA's Land Manager Tamra Elliott. Participants will explore a unique remnant of Iowa's historic woodland ecosystems within a 485-acre managed peninsula that is rich in both flora and fauna.

Visitors will learn about efforts to ecologically restore remnant areas of the historic Big Grove Woodland within the larger context of a mosaic of prairie and savanna.

This event is a must-attend for nature enthusiasts and those passionate about environmental stewardship.

**Date:**

Saturday, May 18, 2024 at  
10:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:**

University of Iowa's Macbride  
Nature Recreation Area  
3895 Raptor Ridge Road NE  
Solon, Iowa 52333

**Contact:**

Pauline Drobney  
prairiepauline@me.com

**Hosted by:**

Tamra Elliott, Land Manager, University of Iowa Macbride Nature Recreation Area

**RSVP:**

To register, please email Pauline Drobney at prairiepauline@me.com



Photo courtesy of University of Iowa Facilities Management



# Spring Into Action

## Event Details

Join Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Blank Park Zoo, and Polk County Conservation as we work together to restore Iowa's woodland flora.

Invasive plant species put pressure on our native woodlands, and we need your help in restoring this habitat.

When we remove invasive plants, we are helping our native plants and wildlife to flourish, and the animals at the Zoo have the opportunity to enjoy a treat. Honeysuckle, an invasive plant, is one the favorites of animals in the Zoo's care.

This event is appropriate for ages 8+. No experience necessary.

**Date:**

Saturday, May 18, 2024

**Time:**

10:00am – 12:00pm

**Location:**

Fort Des Moines Park, Shelter #1  
7200 SE 5th Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50315

**Contact:**

ConservationVolunteers@  
polkcountyiowa.gov

**Hosted by:**

Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Blank Park Zoo, and Polk County Conservation

**RSVP (Required):**

[inhf.org/events/eid/14d901b8f4926dbb/partner-events/spring-into-action-des-moines/](https://inhf.org/events/eid/14d901b8f4926dbb/partner-events/spring-into-action-des-moines/)

# Doolittle Prairie Walks

## Event Details

Join Dr. Thomas Rosburg on monthly prairie walks at the largest prairie remnant in Story County. See rare and common prairie flora that change each month, and learn about the history and ecology of Central Iowa prairies.

Long pants, long sleeves, sturdy, closed-toe shoes, and bug spray are recommended. Poison ivy is present in some areas. You may also want sunscreen, bug spray, a hat, and/or something to drink. There is no restroom available on site.

These walks are free, but registration is encouraged by the day prior to each walk.

**Dates:**

Tuesday, May 21, 2024  
Tuesday, June 18, 2024  
Tuesday, July 16, 2024  
Tuesday, August 20, 2024

**Time:**

7:00pm – 8:30pm

**Location:**

Doolittle Prairie  
14249 560th Avenue  
Story City, Iowa 50248

**Sponsored by:**

Story County Conservation, Iowa Prairie Network, and Iowa Native Plant Society

**RSVP (Encouraged):**

[mycountyparks.com/County/Story/Park/Doolittle-Prairie/Events/24094/Evening-Prairie-Walks.aspx](https://mycountyparks.com/County/Story/Park/Doolittle-Prairie/Events/24094/Evening-Prairie-Walks.aspx)

# Oxbow Restoration Event

## Event Details

Have you thought about new ways you can help improve water quality and restore native ecosystems?

Get involved by learning about oxbows and Native Prairie Bison's restoration efforts in Story County.

2:00pm – 4:00 pm: Educational talks on oxbow restoration

3:00pm: Bison chili (free will donation)

Join us anytime during the event! Native Prairie Bison T-shirts and bison meat will be available for purchase. All proceeds will go toward the successful completion of the oxbow project.

**Date:**

Friday, May 31, 2024

**Time:**

2:00pm – 7:00pm

**Location:**

Alluvial Brewing Company  
3715 190th Street  
Ames, Iowa 50014

**Contact:**

[nativeprairiebison@gmail.com](mailto:nativeprairiebison@gmail.com)

**Hosted by:**

Native Prairie Bison and Alluvial Brewing Company

**More Information:**

[facebook.com/events/388211594036174](https://facebook.com/events/388211594036174)

## 2024 Loess Hills Prairie Seminar: The Hills Are Calling!

## Event Details

Come explore, learn, and relax in the Heart of the Loess Hills in Monona County for the 47th Anniversary of the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar!

This seminar attempts to connect attendees from all walks of life – students, educators, families, professionals in the conservation field, and all community members – to this precious wilderness. Each year, we see families come back. It has grown to be a multi-generational event. Plan to enjoy a wonderful weekend in Iowa's Loess Hills!

**Date:**

Friday, May 31 at 5:00pm –  
Sunday, June 2, 2024 at  
12:00 pm

**Location:**

Monona County Conservation  
318 E. Iowa Avenue  
Onawa, Iowa 51040

**Contact:**

[mccbnat@mononacounty.org](mailto:mccbnat@mononacounty.org)

**Hosted by:**

Monona County Conservation

**More Information:**

[loesshillsprairieseminar.com/](https://loesshillsprairieseminar.com/)



# Cyperaceae and Juncaceae Identification Workshop

## Event Details

Nahant Marsh is a 382-acre preserve nestled in southwest Davenport. It is part of a 513-acre wetland complex that is bordered by the Mississippi River, Interstate 280, and Highway 22.

There are at least 56 *Carex* species known for Scott County. A variety of ecosystems will be observed, including floodplain forest, oak savanna, upland woods, marsh, and sedge meadow, and remnant prairie. A very hands-on approach is used. Participants will use a dissecting scope to observe and key specimens.

Registration includes a full set of keys for all Cyperaceae and Juncaceae in Iowa, handouts on plant morphology and habitat assessment, and lunches and snacks.

**Date:**

Tuesday, July 9 at 8:00am  
— Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 2:30pm

**Location:**

Nahant Marsh Education Center  
4220 Wapello Avenue  
Davenport, Iowa 52802

**Contact:**

Dr. Thomas Rosburg  
[thomas.rosburg@drake.edu](mailto:thomas.rosburg@drake.edu)  
(515) 460-4468

**Hosted by:**

Dr. Thomas Rosburg, Professor, Department of Biology, Drake University

**RSVP (Required; Closes on July 2):**

[nahantmarsh.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/nahantmarsh/event.jsp?event=5766](https://nahantmarsh.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/nahantmarsh/event.jsp?event=5766)



Photo courtesy of Travel Iowa

# 2024 Iowa Prairie Conference

## Event Details

The 2024 Iowa Prairie Conference (IPC) will be held on the picturesque shores of West Okoboji Lake at Little Miller's Bay.

Environmental Specialist Senior John Pearson will deliver the keynote presentation on Cayler State Preserve, followed by a series of educational sessions covering topics such as prairie fens, prairie and soil restoration, area archaeology, prescribed burn cooperatives, the farm bill update, and the Iowa Nature Summit.

On Friday afternoon, attendees will have the opportunity to visit area prairie strips and participate in guided hikes showcasing special and unique fens, wetlands, and prairie remnants.

Saturday evening activities include an excursion on the Queen II to learn about shoreline restoration, as well as visits to Excelsior Fen/Dugout Creek Complex and Freda Haffner Kettlehole.

Sunday's agenda features a birding adventure, insights from author and prairie enthusiast Connie Mutel, and visits to native seed dealer The Prairie Flower, an oak savanna restoration, Kirchner Prairie, and Cayler Prairie.

### Date:

Friday, August 16 – Sunday,  
August 18, 2024

### Location:

Iowa Lakeside Laboratory  
Regents Resource Center  
1838 Highway 86  
Milford, Iowa 51351

### Contact:

Iowa Prairie Network  
[iowaprairienetwork@gmail.com](mailto:iowaprairienetwork@gmail.com)

### Scholarships:

Available for students to attend

### Poster Presentations:

Contact Russ Benedict at  
[benedictr@central.edu](mailto:benedictr@central.edu) by  
Sunday, June 30, 2024

### Hosted by:

Iowa Prairie Network

### RSVP:

<https://friendsoflakesidelab.org/2024-iowa-prairie-conference/>

## Iowa Native Plant Society Annual Meeting

Friday, August 16, 2024

3:30pm – 5:00pm

Iowa Lakeside Laboratory

*Registration for IPC not required to attend INPS annual meeting.*





Photo courtesy of Plant. Grow. Fly.



Photo courtesy of Blank Park Zoo



Photo courtesy of Plant. Grow. Fly.



Photo courtesy of Plant. Grow. Fly.



Plant. Grow. Fly.  
BLANK PARK ZOO

## Plant. Grow. Fly.

**T**he Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS) is pleased to support Plant. Grow. Fly., a conservation initiative by the Blank Park Zoo to help protect our native pollinators.

The Plant. Grow. Fly. website offers easy, region-specific garden recipes to help you plant the flowers and grasses that our native butterflies and bees need the most. Submit your garden to Plant. Grow. Fly. to be recognized on the website for supporting our Midwestern pollinators!

Learn more about this initiative on the Plant. Grow. Fly. website: [blankparkzoo.com/conservation/plantgrowfly](http://blankparkzoo.com/conservation/plantgrowfly).

# Join the Iowa Native Plant Society!

Iowa Native Plant Society (INPS) members receive the biannual newsletter, updates on all native plant happenings across the state, and discounts on INPS merchandise.

Dues are payable on a calendar year basis (from January 1 to December 31). Annual contributions beyond the basic membership level are tax deductible (marked with \* below).

**Please complete and mail this form along with your dues to:  
Iowa Native Plant Society, 4486 88th Street, Urbandale, IA 50322**

Your information is *never* distributed to other organizations or companies.

For questions, please contact [iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com](mailto:iowanativeplantsociety@gmail.com)

## Contact Information

**First and Last Name**

**Street Address**

**City/State**

**Zip Code**

**Phone Number**

**Email Address**

## Membership Type

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Membership (\$25) | <input type="checkbox"/> One-Time Student Membership (\$5) (school email required)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anemone (\$40)*         | <input type="checkbox"/> Botrychium (\$50)* <input type="checkbox"/> Calamagrostis (\$100)* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dodocatheon (\$150)*    | <input type="checkbox"/> Erythronium (\$200+)*  |

## Newsletter Sign-Up

I wish to receive the biannual newsletter by: ☐ Email ☐ USPS (\$10 extra)

**Iowa Native Plant Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.**