Join us for our annual celebration of prairies and savannas
This year’s theme is Natural Restoration - challenges and opportunities

The conference will offer presentations on insects, turtles, climax seeding prairie and woodland restoration compared and much more. And what conference would be complete without a session on managing invasive plants! Stay for The Prairie Enthusiasts annual all-chapter banquet after the conference. The entire day enables you to network and meet up with old friends.

Doors to the conference open at 8 a.m. Saturday when you can check-in at the registration desk. Enjoy a continental breakfast while you review your conference materials.

Highlights include:

• Friday evening social hour at Steve’s Pizza
• Keynote address by Dr. Lytton John Musselman, Professor of Botany at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.
• Nine breakout sessions covering a variety of conservation topics.
• Two panel discussions on building strong organizations.
• Evening banquet, chapter updates and awards.

Friday Social

The Friday social is from 5 – 9 p.m. at Steve’s Pizza, Mediterraneo Room, Main St., Platteville, Wis.

Conference

The conference will be held in Ullsvik Hall’s Velsy Commons at the University of Wisconsin – Platteville, 1 University Plaza, Platteville, Wis. 53818
Conference schedule

8:00 a.m.  Registration and continental breakfast
8:45 a.m.  Welcome
9 - 9:45 a.m.  Keynote address Following Flames from Prairie Bluffs to Blackwater Pines by Dr. Lytton John Musselman, Professor of Botany at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.
9:45 – 10 a.m.  Break
10: 45 – 11 a.m.  Three presentations run concurrently.
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.
  •  Timber Rattlesnakes and Hill Prairie Management in Northeast Iowa, presented by Greg Schmidt, Private Lands Biologist, Iowa DNR.
  •  The Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative: A Proactive, Non-Regulatory Approach to Species Recovery presented by Brenna Jones, Conservation Biologist, Wisconsin DNR.
11:00 – 11:45 a.m.
  •  Turtles in Trouble: How to help local turtle populations, presented by Rebecca Christoffel, President, Snake Conservation Society & co-director of Turtles for Tomorrow.
  •  Restoring Conservative Species: Where ecology, economics and mythology collide, presented by Scott Weber, Bluestem Farm.
  •  Southwest Wisconsin Grasslands Network- engaging private landowners with impactful promotion of grasslands for wildlife, water, farms and communities, presented by Cindy Becker, Southwest Grasslands Network Coordinator, Driftless Area Land Conservancy.
1:30 – 2:15 p.m.
  •  Prairie Butterflies and Moths: identification, natural history, and management, presented by Armund Bartz, Driftless Area Ecologists, WI-DNR.
  •  Exploring Methods and efficient timing for control of invasive plants, presented by Jared Urban, WI-DNR State Natural Area Volunteer Coordinator.
  •  Biodiversity strategies: How staff, stewards, advocates and educators can build a culture of conservation, presented by Stephen Packard, author of Tallgrass Restoration Handbook: for Prairies, Savannas and Woodlands.

Panel discussions
There will be two concurrent panel discussions between 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.
  •  Planting Seeds: Using programs and social media to foster a love of prairies among all generations. Panelists will be:
    •  Martha Querin-Schultz, TPE Southwest Chapter Board Member and Social Media Administrator.
    •  Gary Eldred, TPE Director Emeritus and one of the founders of The Prairie Enthusiasts.
    •  Amy Chamberlain, TPE Empire-Sauk Member, and Moely Prairie Site Volunteer/Social Media Coordinator.
  •  Common problems and solutions among conservation organizations.
Panelists will be:
    •  Carol Abrahamzon, Executive Director, Mississippi Valley Conservancy.
    •  Cindy Becker, Blue Mounds Area Project (BMAP).
    •  Executive Director, Driftless Area Land Conservancy.
    •  Chris Kirkpatrick, Executive Director, The Prairie Enthusiasts.
TPE Photo Contest

A major highlight of every TPE annual conference is the Photo Contest. Photos can be submitted by anyone of anything related to prairies and savannas. The finalists will be selected by the conference host chapters, and the winners are determined by a vote of the conference participants. All finalists receive the framed print of their photo used at the conference, and the winning photograph will be used on the cover of our next annual report. Please send your photo files by email before Friday, Feb. 1, 2020, to Joe Rising at TPE@ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org. Please contact Joe at (608) 638-1873 with any questions.

Pre-Conference Gathering

On Friday, Feb. 28, from 5 - 8:30 p.m., we gather at the Steve’s Pizza (Mediterraneo Room, 175 W. Main St., Platteville) to welcome all conference attendees and guests. There will be a cash bar and a limited menu from which you can order dinner.

Raffle & Silent Auction

Bid on and buy raffle tickets for a variety of great items, such as cookies, jams, honey, artwork, beer and wine. The raffle and silent auction benefit the local chapter. If you wish to donate to the raffle and silent auction, contact your chapter chairperson no later than Feb. 1.

Sponsors & Exhibitors

Visit our sponsor and exhibitor displays featuring information about plants, land management and more. The Prairie Enthusiasts will have a table where you can purchase tote bags, t-shirts, hats, books and other items. Cash, checks and credit cards accepted.

Lodging:

Our host hotel for the event is The Country Inn, 630 S. Water St., Platteville. We have a block of rooms reserved for $95 per night for both Friday and Saturday night. Rooms contain two queen beds. To qualify for the block rate, you need to call to make a reservation no later than Jan. 28. The number is 608-348-7373.

There are a number of other hotels in Platteville. Rates seem to vary depending on how you book so check with the hotel to get a current rate. The rate shown may or may not be the one that applies to you.

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To help us assign the right-sized rooms to the sessions, please select five sessions you are likely to attend:

- Timber Rattlesnakes & Hill Prairie Management in NE Iowa
- Prairie and Woodland Restoration Compared
- Wisconsin Monarch Collaborative
- Turtles in Trouble
- Southwest Wisconsin Grasslands Network
- Prairie Butterflies & Moths
- Identifying Rare Insects
- Methods & Effective Timing for Control of Invasive Plants
- Biodiversity Strategies
- Planting Seeds: Using Programs & Social Media
- Common Problems and Solutions among Conservation Organizations