

Platte Prairies Field Day Agenda
July 12, 2013
The Nature Conservancy's Derr House

8am-9am Early Morning Bird Hike with Michelle Biodrowski

Main Sessions: (During each session you can either take one hike or attend two tent/house sessions)

9am – 10:15

Hikes (1 hour each)

Plant identification

Fire/grazing management

Tent/House Sessions (30 min each)

Gardening with native plants

Invasive plants/trees

10:30-11:45

Hikes (1 hour each)

Prairie restoration

Patch-burn grazing impacts on birds

Tent/House Sessions (30 min each)

Reptiles/amphibians

Small mammals

Sweep netting for insects

Invasive plants/trees

11:45-12:30 – Lunch (bring your own)

12:30-1:45

Hikes (1 hour each)

Plant identification

Prairie restoration

Tent/House Sessions (30 min each)

Reptiles/amphibians

Invasive plants/trees

Small mammals

Regal fritillary butterflies

2:00-3:15

Hikes (1 hour each)

Overseeding degraded prairies

Prairie natural history

Tent/House Sessions (30 min each)

Reptiles/amphibians

Gardening with native plants

Sweep netting for insects

Invasive plants/trees

3:30-4:00

Tour of Seed Barn/Nursery Plots

For more information and for directions to the site, go to:

<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/nebraska/events/platte-prairies-field-day.xml>

Session Descriptions

Hikes

Early morning bird hike with Michelle Biodrowski (UNO Graduate Student).

Patch-burn grazing impacts on grassland birds with Michelle Biodrowski (UNO Graduate Student). Learn about the results of two years of research on whether or not boundaries between burned/unburned patches impact nesting and territory location of grassland bird species.

Plant identification with Gerry Steinauer (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission). Hike prairies and wetlands with the state botanist and learn how to identify native and invasive plant species.

Prairie restoration with Nelson Winkel (The Nature Conservancy). Hike through prairies that were seeded with 160-200 plant species and learn about why and how they were created.

Fire/grazing management with Chris Helzer (The Nature Conservancy). Hike through prairies that are being managed for habitat structure and biological diversity with a variety of fire and grazing strategies, including modified patch-burn grazing management.

Overseeding degraded prairies with Chris Helzer (The Nature Conservancy). Carpool to a couple locations and see the results and lessons learned from more than a decade of attempts to improve plant diversity in degraded sites.

Prairie Natural History. Hike the prairie with a variety of naturalists and experts and learn about a wide range of species and ecological interactions.

Tent/House Sessions

Reptiles and amphibians with Dennis Ferraro (UNL). See live animals and learn about their life histories.

Small mammals of the prairie with Mike Schrad (Master Naturalist).

Regal fritillary butterflies with Mardell Jasnowski (The Nature Conservancy). Learn about this fascinating butterfly species and how it uses the Platte River Prairies, including results from three recent seasons of research.

Gardening with native plants (Mardell Jasnowski – The Nature Conservancy, Karen Hamburger – Master Naturalist). Learn how to incorporate native prairie plants into landscaping, including plants that work well and plants that can provide special challenges.

Invasive plants/trees. See examples of invasive plants found along the Central Platte River, learn how to identify and kill them. In addition, see an innovative tool for targeted control of small trees that invade prairies.

Sweep netting for insects with Bob Mills, Bethany Teeters, and Bill Beachly. Roam the prairies near the Derr House with sweep nets and learn to identify some of the incredible diversity of invertebrates that live in grasslands.