

Dyck Arboretum of the Plains

PrairieWindow

to promote through education and stewardship, the conservation and use of plants native and adaptable to Kansas



Fall 2019 Vol. 29 No. 3

Kansas State Eco-Meet returns to Dyck Arboretum

by Janelle Flory Schrock, Office Manager

Each year, teams of high school students from across the state of Kansas compete in a series of challenges at the State Eco-Meet. On November 7, 2019, for the first time since 2013, this competition was held at the Dyck Arboretum.

The mission of the State Eco-Meet is “to challenge and inspire an interest in, appreciation of and an understanding of the natural sciences and the Kansas environment through interscholastic competition.”

Teams were tested in four different areas: a lab-type habitat challenge, which tests students’ integrated knowledge of specific Kansas habitat types; a lab-type focus test, testing students’ knowledge of one particular group of animals; a scavenger hunt testing students’ ability to locate and identify various natural objects, primarily native plants; and an interpretation challenge, testing students’ ability to communicate ideas to an audience.

Competing schools at the 2019 Eco-Meet came from across Kansas, including Overland Park, Shawnee, Dodge City, Wichita, Goddard, Haven, Pratt, Lyons, Wilson, Lindsborg, Salina, Tescott, Scandia, Palco, Pittsburg, Goodland, Stockton, and Beloit.

As an organization, we are privileged to be a part of extra-curricular educational events like these, when teachers, organizers and students are all working together to challenge one another to grow in their knowledge of the natural world. Their passion for learning and engaging with the environment is contagious and gives us hope for the years to come.

The Arboretum staff would like to say thank you to the teachers and organizers and congratulations to all of the participants. We wish you the best as you continue to grow, learn, and become Kansas’ next generation of eco-leaders.



Left: Proctors from the Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism work with students on the scavenger hunt portion of the Kansas State Eco-Meet in our Prairie Window Project at the 2013 competition. Right: Students complete the focus test on mammalogy in the greenhouse in 2013. This year the focus test on ornithology took place in the newly completed Prairie Discovery Lab.

2020 Winter Lecture Series

by Brad Guhr, Education Coordinator

Stimulate your intellect and expand your horizons during January, February and March at Dyck Arboretum of the Plains. Featured topics for this coming series are birds, bread making, and petroglyphs. Lectures begin at 6:30 and end by 8 p.m.

Cost: \$5 per person.



Tuesday, January 28, 2020 with Chuck Otte

Kansas Bird Populations and Distributions

Chuck Otte has been a long-time Geary County KSU Extension Agent which has made him a keen observer of the plants and animals of Kansas and how humans interact with them. He also manages the immense database of the Kansas Bird LISTSERV, the go-to hub of information where birders around the state report findings and engage in conversations about all things birds. And finally, Chuck is himself an avid birdwatcher with decades of experience birding around the state. Come learn from this animated and informative co-author of the book *Birds of Kansas* and be inspired to better understand the birds around you.



Tuesday, February 25, 2020 with Sharon Entz

Turkey Red Bread on the Plains

What do you get when you combine deep Kansas ancestry with generations of growing hard winter wheat, a milling science degree, passion for locally-sourced ingredients, an entrepreneurial spirit, and thousands of hours of bread baking experimentation? You get magic, otherwise known as *Crust & Crumb* by Sharon Entz. Sharon's artistry for delicious savory and sweet baked goods has drawn nearly a cult following and is a popular feature at restaurants and farmers markets throughout South-Central Kansas as well as during intermissions of the Dyck Arboretum's Prairie Window Concert Series. Come hear, see, and possibly even taste the story of *Crust & Crumb*.



Tuesday, March 31, 2020 with Rex Buchanan

Petroglyphs of the Kansas Smoky Hills

Long before the coming of Euro-Americans, native inhabitants of what is now Kansas left their mark on the land: carvings in the soft orange and red sandstone of the state's Smoky Hills. In his new co-authored book, *Petroglyphs of the Kansas Smoky Hills*, Rex Buchanan offers viewers a chance to read the stories that these carvings tell of the region's first people—and to appreciate an important feature of Kansas history and its landscape that is increasingly threatened by erosion and vandalism. With photos from the book, Rex will present the fascinating story of what is known of the petroglyphs, how and when they were made, and what they can tell us of the early people of Kansas.

Presenting a book club for nature lovers!

We cordially invite you to join us and the Hesston Public Library for lively, informative discussions focusing on fiction and non-fiction books about the natural world. Our first “Meet and Greet” meeting will be held at the Dyck Arboretum on Monday, January 13, 2020, from 6:45 to 8:00 p.m. Subsequent quarterly Nature Book Club meetings will be announced after the January meeting.

These titles will be available for check-out at the Hesston Public Library mid-November. Watch for upcoming reviews of the current titles on the Hesston Public Library and Dyck Arboretum web sites. For more information, contact Hesston Public Library (620-327-4666)/ <https://hesston.sckslibrary.info/>) or the Arboretum office.

January book selections come highly recommended by Arboretum and Library staff. They include the following titles:

The Diversity of Life

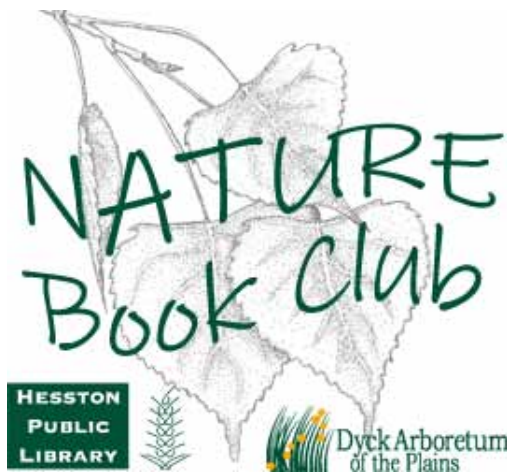
by E. O. Wilson

Pulitzer Prize-winning non-fiction that elegantly states the case for the wonder & beauty of the diversity of life on Earth.

Lab Girl

by Hope Jahren

Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for Autobiography, Lab Girl celebrates Jahren’s lifelong curiosity, humility and passion as she studies trees, flowers, seeds and soil.



The Overstory

by Richard Powell

Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction, intertwining the stories of humans and trees.

The Nature Principle

by Richard Louv

Non-fiction that, as Canadian academic David Suzuki poignantly states, “... provides a way back to where we belong, a world full of reverence, joy and discovery”.

Register for the 2020 Spring Native Plant School!

The Dyck Arboretum of the Plains offers numerous workshops that encourage the use of native plants in landscaping. Native plants are drought-tolerant, ornamental, and provide food and shelter to wildlife. A landscape rich with native plants can be enjoyed for its beauty and the wealth of birds and pollinators it attracts.

All classes are \$10 per person, or \$40 when you register for all five classes by January 31st. Members may apply their discount or coupon to class registrations. Visit dyckarboretum.org/arboretum-events/ to register.

Trees, Shrubs and Vines for Kansas

Saturday, Feb. 1, 9 a.m.

An introduction to the top performing trees, shrubs and vines best adapted to Kansas’ climate, from new horticultural introductions to old favorites.

Small Space Native Gardens

Thursday, Feb. 6, 7 p.m. or Saturday, Feb. 8, 9 a.m.

Native perennial beds don’t have to be big to be beneficial — this class focuses on small space design techniques and petite plant selection.

Weed Identification and Control

Saturday, February 22, 9 a.m.

Learn to identify the common weeds in our area and the best way to keep them out of your garden.

Buffalo Grass Lawns

Thursday, February 27, 7 p.m. or Saturday, February 29, 9 a.m.

A primer course on how to prepare, install and maintain a water-wise native buffalo grass lawn.

Rain Gardens

Thursday, March 26, 7 p.m.

Plant a resilient rain garden in that soggy spot of the yard; sequester rainwater, attract pollinators, and create amphibian habitat!

SYMPOSIUM 2020: Mushrooms of Kansas

We are working on a spring symposium to be held in Mid February or early March about Mushrooms of Kansas. Stay tuned for more information to come soon!

Gardener Spotlight: Novice embraces native plants

by Katie Schmidt, Horticulturist/Grounds Manager

Before moving to her current home, Amanda Brown had little experience with gardening. Her limestone A-frame in McPherson is eye-catching from the street and all the more charming up close. Its raised gardens are extensive, spanning the front and side of the house, filled with Penstemon, Asters, and Echinacea. As I admire them, Amanda laughs modestly. “The beds were here when we bought it, but they were full of that red thorny bush,” meaning barberry, a staple of home landscaping for far too many years. She ripped them out, along with Leucantheums and Hostas, relocating some and pitching others.

Only three years into her tenure as a home gardener, she is confidently casting aside the ordinary and overplayed, and opting for a clean, modern aesthetic with native plants.

Amanda completed a master gardener course soon after buying the house. “I kept hearing people say she [the previous owner] was a master gardener, and I thought, what’s that? Maybe I want to do that.” Amanda and her mother both signed up for the class and visited the Arboretum during one of the sessions. “I fell in love with natives there. As a stay-at-home mom, low-maintenance plants are the only way to go.”

Arboretum Director Scott Vogt designed the beds using no-fuss species perfect for a busy family. She asked for “a multi-season garden, lots of color”, and it does not disappoint.

Amanda appreciates the butterflies native plants attract, showing them to her children. She has even taught the kiddos to dead head flowers. This might explain why her beds look so tidy! She also keeps a thick layer of mulch on and applies pre-emergent every three months.

She cites the master gardener training as critical to her success. “You don’t know what you don’t know. Become a master gardener and get a taste of what your options are, figure out what you are passionate about.”

Before leaving, I spy some black plastic in the backyard and freshly turned soil near the chicken coup. Amanda is already preparing for next spring’s garden ventures. On the agenda? Raised vegetable beds and some native flower areas “using only new things I don’t have anywhere else”. Her enthusiasm is contagious; it’s obvious the gardening bug has bit another unsuspecting soul. How lucky we are that Amanda is hooked on natives and will be enjoying her prairie garden for years to come.



Brown consulted with Arboretum director Scott Vogt to create a design for her landscape. A limited number of consultation/design slots are available for Spring 2020. Please submit a consultation request by calling 620-327-8127 or using the contact form at dyckarboretum.org.

SPRING 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JAN 13	6:45 p.m. January Meet Up NATURE BOOK CLUB	8:30 a.m. Go Green Leprechaun Run 2MILE/10K FUN RUN	MAR 14
JAN 28	6:30 p.m. Bird Watching in Kansas WINTER LECTURE SERIES	4:00 p.m. Dala PRAIRIE WINDOW CONCERT SERIES	MAR 15
FEB 1	9:00 a.m. Trees, Shrubs and Vines for Kansas NATIVE PLANT SCHOOL	7:00 p.m. Rain Gardens NATIVE PLANT SCHOOL	MAR 26
FEB 6/8	7:00 p.m. Thurs or 9:00 a.m. Sat Small Space Native Gardens NATIVE PLANT SCHOOL	6:30 p.m. Petroglyphs of the KS Smoky Hills WINTER LECTURE SERIES	MAR 31
FEB 9	4:00 p.m. Missy Anderson & Her One Man Band PRAIRIE WINDOW CONCERT SERIES	4:00 p.m. Krista Detor PRAIRIE WINDOW CONCERT SERIES	APR 7
FEB 22	9:00 a.m. Weed Identification and Control NATIVE PLANT SCHOOL	ALL DAY EARTH DAY 50TH ANNIVERSARY	APR 22
FEB 25	6:30 p.m. Turkey Red Bread on the Plains WINTER LECTURE SERIES	8:00 a.m. to 7 p.m. FloraKansas Member Day NATIVE PLANT FESTIVAL	APR 23
FEB 27/29	7:00 p.m. Thurs or 9:00 a.m. Sat Buffalo Grass Lawns NATIVE PLANT SCHOOL	Times Vary Each Day FloraKansas Public Days NATIVE PLANT FESTIVAL	APR 24-27
MAR 1	4:00 p.m. Flagship Romance PRAIRIE WINDOW CONCERT SERIES	4:00 p.m. Jeffrey Foucault PRAIRIE WINDOW CONCERT SERIES	MAY 3
Date TBD	ALL DAY Mushrooms of Kansas SPRING SYMPOSIUM	Come explore the prairie with us! Visit www.dyckarboretum.org/events to learn more and register.	

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Address Service Requested

Winter Luminary Walk is almost here!

The 2019 Winter Luminary Walk “*The Prairie Sleeps*” is an opportunity to enjoy the natural beauty of Kansas in winter. From 5:30 to 8 p.m. on November 29 and 30, and on December 6 and 7, the paved path will be lit with real candle luminaries and tens of thousands of lights.

We are already preparing new botanically-themed lighting features, that will inspire wonder for the natural world for our new and returning visitors. The fire pits will be toasty warm and equipped for s’mores.

Take a break from the cold with hot drinks and cookies in the Visitor Center, and enjoy various stylings of music and entertainment in the Prairie Pavilion. Music will include RoJean Loucks on harp on Saturday, Nov 30 at 7 p.m. and the Prairie Bronze Handbell Ensemble on Friday, Dec 6 at 6:30 and 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 7 will be Family Night, including crafts, hayrides, and free admission for children with a paying adult.

Advanced tickets may be purchased in the Arboretum office for \$5 for adults and \$2 for children ages 3 to 12. Tickets at the door are \$6/adults and \$3/children.

To sign up as a volunteer or for more information, visit www.dyckarboretum.org.



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Horticulturist
Brad Guhr, Education/Prairie Restoration/
Concert Series Coordinator
Janelle Flory Schrock, Office Manager
Katie Schmidt, Horticulturist/
Grounds Manager

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