

Michigan
Botanical Club
Southeastern Chapter
Newsletter



OCTOBER 2009

Editor - Emily Nietering

FALL PROGRAMS

WILDFLOWERS OF MONTANA
from the **BOB MARSHALL**
WILDERNESS
BY **NORMA HENDERSON**
(with member slide show)

Sunday, October 4, 2:00 pm

SEC member Norma Henderson will share her photos of wildflowers taken on a Sierra Club trip to the Bob Marshall Wilderness of Montana. This Wilderness was established in 1964 and covers over 1,000,000 acres in NW Montana, not far from Glacier National Park. It ranges in elevation from 4,000 to 9,000 feet. After Norma's program we'll have time for any member who wishes to show a few slides. These are the old-fashioned slides in a tray that many of us must have stashed in our closets. Why not pull out a few for us to enjoy? You bring the slides, we'll provide the projector.

FIELD TRIP

Belle Isle's Oak Wetland Forest
cosponsored by the Stewardship Network

Sunday, October 25
1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

The Michigan Natural Features Inventory has recently described a new forest community within the state—wet-mesic flatwoods—that are found primarily

on southeastern Michigan's glacial lakeplain. As this area was settled early in Michigan's history, few examples remain, although several survive in urban parks. Join leaders Allen Chartier & Suzan Campbell at the Belle Isle Nature Zoo for a walk in Belle Isle's woods, where you'll see Shumard oak, shellbark hickory, wahoo, and a few surviving pumpkin ash.

SPIDERS IN YOUR GARDEN

BY **CARYLE SPENCE**

Sunday November 1, 2:00 pm

Some people think the only good spider is a dead spider. Join us for this program where SEC member Caryle Spence will prove otherwise. She will share her wonderful photographs of spiders, most of them taken right in her backyard, while she explains their natural history. Is it a coincidence that this is the day after Halloween?

MEETING LOCATION

We will meet at **Heritage Park in Farmington Hills**. Heritage Park is located at on the west side of Farmington Road between 10 and 11 Mile Roads. We will meet at the **Vagnozzi Visitors Center**. There is plenty of free parking just outside the door. Join us this fall and bring a friend. Refreshments will be provided after each program. Come early or stay late and visit the nature center or hike the paved trails in the park.

MBC STATE FALL MEETING Saturday October 10

This year we will meet on the campus of Calvin College in Grand Rapids in Room 110 of the Science Building. The MBC Board will have their business meeting at 11:00 am. At 1:00 pm Dr. David Warners, of the Calvin College faculty, will present a program entitled "Creation Ecology on a College Campus: Transforming Lawn into Forest." Following his presentation he will lead a campus field trip to see some of the work being done. Everyone is welcome to attend the Board meeting, program and field trip.

Propagating Native Plants from Seed

Date: Saturday, October 17, 2009

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Location: Belle Isle Nature Zoo, Detroit

Leader: Suzan Campbell

Description:

Learn to grow native plants from locally collected seed. Workshop includes an overview of natives in flower, fruit and seed, and treatments including stratification, scarification, etc. Participants will receive seed from 10-15 species to clean and prepare during class and take home for their own gardens.

Registration required: yes

Registration limit (min/max): 8/25

Cost: \$25.00 for Stewardship Network or Detroit Zoological Society members, \$30.00 for non-members

For information contact Suzan Campbell (cell 313.378.0433) but you need to register online. Registration can be found at www.stewardshipnetwork.org Click on clusters and follow it to the Lakeplain Cluster.

FIELD TRIP REPORT Shanghai Prairie September 26, 2009

by Emily Nietering

At least 20 (a few left early and a few arrived late) participants gathered on a cloudy morning in the parking lot of the picnic area behind St. Joe's Hospital in Ypsilanti to join leader Aunita Erskine in a tour of Shanghai Prairie. Aunita began with several aerial photographs of the area, showing us the location of the prairie between the steep glacial moraine on one side and the railroad tracks on the other. She explained how it probably received its name from the location of a camp for Chinese railroad workers in the late 1800's. Some of the known history of the area includes gravel mining that was done in long lines, giving rise to parallel ridges and valleys allowing for both wetland and dry soil species to find a home there. Due to the presence of other pockets of prairie along the Huron River throughout the Ann Arbor area, this very likely was original prairie.

We descended down the stairs and across the boardwalk, recently installed as an Eagle Scout project, to the prairie, with our eyes on the lookout for the Fringed Gentian, *Gentianopsis crinita* (formerly *Gentiana*). We easily found them, but they were all closed. How disappointing! We continued on admiring the various asters in bloom such as the bright purple New England aster, *Symphotrichum novae-angliae* (formerly of the genus *Aster*), Smooth aster, *S. laevis*, Heath aster, *S. ericoides*, and Calico aster, *S. lateriflorum*. Of course the common prairie grasses Big and Little Bluestem and Indian Grass were present in abundance. We spent some time keying out the goldenrods, finding Stiff Goldenrod, *Oligoneuron rigidum* (formerly *Solidago*), Tall Goldenrod *Solidago altissima*, Grass-leaved Goldenrod, *S. graminifolia*, and Bluestem Goldenrod, *S. caesia*. Other prairie wildflowers in bloom were Ladies Tresses, *Spiranthes cernua*, Sweet Everlasting, *Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium* (formerly *Gnaphalium*), Culver's Root, *Veronicastrum*

virginicum and Sneezeweed, *Helenium autumnale*. We were also able to identify several prairie species that were past blooming by the dried inflorescence such as Gray-headed coneflower, two different Blazing Stars, Prairie Dock, Bush-clover and Nodding Onion. All these were found in the area of the prairie where the buckthorn was removed last year. Aunita is hopeful that with more workdays planned this fall (10/31 and 11/14) to remove invading shrubs, more of the prairie can be restored. As the morning progressed it did get a little brighter and suddenly all the Fringed Gentian opened up. Now we could go home happy. We also saw a few of the Bottle Gentian, *Gentiana andrewsii*, which never do open up. Caryle Spence, with her ever-present camera, was on the lookout for butterflies, moths and other insects and did photograph several including a Buck Moth and a Marbled Orbweaver spider. A final sight as we left the prairie was a beautiful native Bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*) encircling a dead tree. This prairie is definitely worth the effort needed to restore it. Those interested in helping with the work days should contact Aunita Erskine at aunitafl@med.umich.edu

Wednesday, November 4, “Wildlife of the Galapagos Islands” by Winnie Chrzanowski.

Wednesday, December 2, “Freshwater Mussels” by Todd Crail.

“The Botany of Desire”
Wednesday, October 28, 8-10 pm
Detroit Public TV

Based on the best-selling book of the same name, this two hour special tells the story of four familiar plant species - the apple, the tulip, marijuana and the potato - relating how they evolved to satisfy humankind’s most basic yearnings. Linking the fundamental desires for sweetness, beauty, intoxication and control, *The Botany of Desire* shows that we humans are intricately woven into the web of nature, not standing outside it. Shot in high-definition the program travels the world from the plant’s point of view. Through the history of these four domesticated plants, this film seeks to answer the question: Who is really domesticating whom?

OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST

Michigan Botanical Club, Huron Valley Chapter meets at Matthaei Botanical Gardens auditorium, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor at 7:45 pm. Call (734) 663-5667 for more information.

Monday, October 19, “**Mt. Rainier-Sub Alpine Plant Survival**” by Ruth Graves.

Monday, November 16, “**Medicinal Plants and Secondary Compounds**” by Bronwen Gates, PhD.

Royal Oak Nature Society meets at Royal Oak Middle School, 709 N. Washington, between 11 Mile and Catalpa (11 ½ Mile) in Royal Oak at 7:25 pm. Call (248) 246-3380 for more information.

Wednesday, October 7, “**Geology of Thunder Bay Island**” by John Zawiskie.

Asters So Beautiful

*Some say you rival not
The lark and woodland thrush.
The sky above is their lot
High above the woods and brush --
You hug the earth and bless it with
your purple blush.
What delights the eye
can delight the ear,
See the songs of the sky
Melodies most dear,
But hear the beauty of the earth in the
colors of the year.*

Henry Kriescher

MICHIGAN BOTANICAL CLUB

The Michigan Botanical Club was founded in 1941. It is a non-profit organization that promotes the understanding, enjoyment and preservation of Michigan plant life and the conservation of our natural resources.

AIMS

- *Conservation of all native plants
- *Education of the public to appreciate and preserve plant life
- *Sponsorship of research and publications on the plant life of the State
- *Sponsorship of legislation to promote the preservation of Michigan native flora
- *Establishment of suitable sanctuaries and natural areas
- *Cooperation in programs concerned with the wise use and conservation of all natural resources and scenic features

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SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER, Michigan Botanical Club

President: Emily Nietering (313) 278-9269
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Secretary: Ruth Hart (313) 361-2141
Treasurer: Richard Fowler (248) 828-2952
Director-at-Large: Alice Ward (248) 673-1183

Please contact any of the above officers for more information about the club, or suggestions for programs and field trips. Everyone is welcome to attend our events whether a member or not. We invite all who support our aims to become members. Individual and family membership for one year is \$20. Dues include a subscription to The Michigan Botanist, the state newsletter Arisaema and the Southeastern Chapter Newsletter. More information is available at our website www.michbotclub.org