



The Prairie Sage

SPRING CREEK PRAIRIE  Audubon CENTER

Fall 2007

Adults and children alike will once again be enchanted by peaceful prairie surroundings at the sixth annual Twilight on the Tallgrass prairie festival on Saturday, September 8, from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m.

This year's theme is "Living Lightly in Nebraska." The festival will feature tours of our "green" Education Building, booths and displays by conservation and energy groups, educational prairie and nighttime activities, and, of course, the beautiful prairie at dusk. New this year is a farmers' market that will give visitors an opportunity to see the variety and quality of locally produced foods available. Those interested in purchasing produce at the market are encouraged to bring a cooler in which to store your purchases while you enjoy the rest of the festival.



"Living Lightly in Nebraska"
Saturday, September 8
5:00 - 10:00 p.m.

- Adults \$5
- Children 12 and under FREE
- Carpool! \$1.00 off each adult admission

The "Prairie Appreciation Trail" will be open from 6:00 to 8:00 for visitors to take a leisurely stroll and interact with naturalists and scientists who find inspiration in the prairie. Small personal journals will be available that can be used to record special sightings, to sketch prairie impressions, or to note interesting facts. There will be plenty of fun things to do while discovering the beauty of the fall grasses and wildflowers:

- Sweep the prairie with nets and collect insects for UNL entomologist Fred Baxendale and his assistants to identify.
- Probe the wetlands with dip nets with UNL entomologist Dave Taylor and his wife Lorraine Leiser to learn more about life in a prairie pond.
- Create and fly a kite made from recycled materials and learn about the power of the wind while practicing kite-flying skills.
- Interact with representatives from Raptor Recovery Nebraska and their live birds of prey.
- Learn about scientific illustration with biologist/artist Karina Helm.

- See live specimens of some of Nebraska's reptiles and amphibians with Dan Fogell from Omaha.
- Find out about alternative power sources.

The evening program, beginning at 8:00, will be hosted by Channels 10/11 anchor Jon Vanderford. Nebraska Humanities Council presenter Otto Rosfeld, Sandhills balladeer and storyteller, will present his program "Treading Lightly or Stomping" on the main stage. A late night trail will open after the main stage performance is concluded, featuring:

- Stargazing with the Prairie Astronomy Club.
- Investigations of nighttime insects.
- Bat netting.

Co-sponsors of this year's festival are the Lower Platte South Natural Resource District, Nebraska Humanities Council, and Wachiska Audubon Society.

Tickets are \$5 for adults and free for children 12 and under. As a special incentive for those who wish to save gas, all adults who carpool will receive \$1 off their admission to the festival.

Come early and bring a picnic. Ice cream and lemonade will be available for a minimum cost; no other food will be available at the prairie. For more information, please call (402) 797-2301 or visit www.springcreekprairie.org.





In Remembrance

We all lost a friend with the death of Aline Hosman of Omaha in May. Aline was an exceptionally bright and inquisitive woman who will be missed by everyone who knew her.

Aline's support for conservation created a wonderful legacy for the children and families of Nebraska. Audubon Nebraska and Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center in particular are part of Aline's legacy. Her generosity made it possible to save the original 640-acre property, later named Spring Creek Prairie, from development. This has created opportunities for thousands of people annually to connect with nature and learn about our wonderful native prairies.

We honor Aline and treasure her memory.

(Photo above [from left]: Deb Hauswald, Marian Langan, Aline Hosman, and Chris Sommerich.)



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2 • 1:00-5:00 P.M. Free Admission

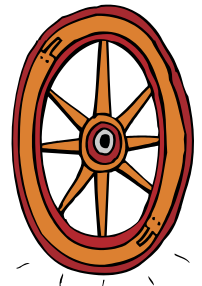
Take a break from the “mall madness” and spend a relaxing hour or two at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. Take a stroll along the prairie trails, or simply enjoy a cup of hot cider or coffee while you leisurely browse our gift shop for nature-related books, toys, and T-shirt for those young and young-at-heart naturalists on your holiday gift list. Family and individual memberships to Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center make great gifts and will also be available for purchase. A trip to the prairie will make your holidays and the holidays for those near and dear a whole lot brighter.

700+ Enjoy Meadowlark Music Festival

Warm summer breezes rustled the cottonwood trees, cicadas droned softly, and fireflies flickered behind the outdoor stage as the The Harvey Pittel Saxophone Quartet tuned and began to play to a crowd of 700 + music lovers at the Meadowlark Music Festival on July 20 at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center. Before the sun settled softly behind the Denton Hills, visitors of all ages used nets to capture prairie insects that would be released again into the grass after being observed and appreciated. Young naturalists investigated badger holes, wetlands, and wildflowers while adults gathered in groups for casual conversation and special awards were given to concertgoers for creative picnic basket designs. The weather, the crowd, the setting, the music — all combined perfectly to make an ideal evening for everyone who attended.

Rims Mark Trail

Our appreciation goes out to Stewardship Board member Ernie Rousek who located, donated, and installed historic wagon wheel rims in our wagon trail ruts in order to enhance the experience of the trails for visitors.



The rims can be found on the trail just south of the dam near the education building. They indicate where the wagons descended to cross Spring Creek on their way west. Thanks, Ernie!

Need Gift Ideas? How About a Membership!

Individual and family memberships to Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center make great “green” gifts. See page 5 for the membership form.

PROGRAMS

Class sizes are limited, so register early by calling 402/797-2301, unless otherwise noted.

CELEBRATING THE TALLGRASS PRAIRIE THROUGH ART EDUCATION

All illustration workshops will be taught by scientific illustrator and Nebraska Statewide Arboretum Botanical Print Winner **Karina Helm** (www.helmillustration.com) and will be held in the education building, unless otherwise noted.

Workshop enrollment: minimum of 3 – maximum of 12.

ADULTS

PLANTS OF THE PRAIRIE: BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

Saturday, September 29 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Learn the basics of drawing and painting tallgrass prairie plants. Through demonstration and presentations, Karina will introduce participants to drawing and painting skills, plant anatomy, and the purpose of botanical illustration. Participants will work in graphite and watercolor techniques. All skill levels are welcome and materials will be provided. \$40/adult.

ILLUSTRATING PRAIRIE LANDSCAPES

Sunday, September 9 2:00-5:00 p.m.

The tallgrass prairie is a beautiful and surprisingly varied setting for drawing and painting landscapes. Join Karina for an afternoon of sketching various landscape scenes along the prairie trails, using pencil, pen, watercolor, and colored pencil techniques. Following demonstrations of techniques, participants can make their own small soft-bound journal, purchase a handmade hardbound journal, or bring along their own sketchbook. With journal in hand, we will head out onto the prairie. All skill levels are welcome and materials will be provided. \$30/adult.

ALL AGES

KEEPING AN ILLUSTRATED FIELD JOURNAL

Sunday, August 26 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 15 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 30 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Learn a range of field-adapted color sketching techniques to quickly illustrate the plants, animals, and landscapes that surround you using pencil, pen, watercolor, and colored pencil techniques. Following demonstrations of techniques, participants can make their own small softbound journal or purchase a hand-made hardbound journal, and then we'll head outside. (On hotter days, prairie subject matter will be brought inside for comfort.) Participants will learn to sharpen observational skills and increase their awareness of the natural world. All ages and levels of experience are welcome and materials will be provided. \$40/person.



PHOTO BY KEVIN POAGUE

“Every child should have mud pies, grasshoppers, waterbugs, tadpoles, frogs, mud turtles, elderberries, wild strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb, brooks to wade in, waterlilies, woodchucks, bats, bees, butterflies, various animals to pet, hay fields, pine cones, rocks to roll, sand snakes, huckleberries, and hornets; and any child who has been deprived of these has been deprived of the best of his (her) education.”

Luther Burbank

Bright Lights assistants Sarah Scheid (left) and Kristine Bryan (back) help students discover what lives in ponds during the Bright Lights program held last June at Spring Creek Prairie.

PROGRAMS

Class sizes are limited, so register early by calling 402/797-2301, unless otherwise noted.

FALL FULL MOON WALKABOUT

Saturday, October 27 6:30-8:30 p.m.

As colder temperatures approach, we humans begin to stay indoors more and rely on artificial environments to keep us warm and cozy. Plants and animals also use a variety of strategies to prepare for the challenges of cooler weather.

This evening walkabout offers an opportunity to say farewell to the warm nights of summer and welcome the seasonal changes that ease us into winter. It is also a night to observe the setting of the sun and the rising of the full moon over the beautiful hills. Most time will be spent walking outdoors; participants should dress for cool weather. Warm cider will top off the evening's activities.

Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration required by October 25. \$6/person.

EXPLORING HANDMADE PAPER

Saturday, November 17 2:00-4:30 p.m.

FUN! FUN! FUN! And just in time to help green up your holidays! Learn how to use recycled ingredients to create interesting papers that will add a personal touch to handmade greeting cards, gift tags, and ornaments. Use simple tools and techniques to explore the versatility of handmade paper pulp and products. It's a wonderful opportunity to play with an inexpensive, easy-to-work-with medium while creating unique paper art.

A great activity for all ages; all children 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. All supplies and materials will be furnished. Class size limited. \$10/person.

Volunteers!

We couldn't do it without them.

Our thanks to our volunteers who over the past few months have helped replant the butterfly garden, dug musk thistles, and staffed the education building.

If you are interested in joining our team, please write or call and we will send you information about volunteer opportunities and future training sessions.

OCTOBER CAMP

Monday-Friday, October 22-26 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Kids! Let us make this fall school break one to remember.

Third, fourth, and fifth graders are invited to spend the week at Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center for the new **October Camp**. Participants will spend time investigating the various ways the plants and animals



of the prairie prepare for the coming winter. Activities will include close-up, hands-on examinations of the habits of vertebrates and invertebrates that live in prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. Weather permitting, local experts will facilitate opportunities to dip for wetland animals, live-trap rodents, locate migratory bird species, and collect and study insects.

Registration limited to 15 participants. Transportation to Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center is not provided. Full and partial scholarships are available. Campers need to provide their own lunch. Call (402) 797-2301 for more information. \$150/child.



PHOTO BY TRUDY ADAMS

Pictured above are some of the 20 horses and riders waiting to begin their trail ride at Spring Creek Prairie in May. The equestrian event was organized by The Platte River Riders of Nebraska.

Horse rides are permissible on the prairie by special arrangement. Contact our office for details.

You Can Make a Gift to Audubon from your IRA

Now you can be a philanthropist. The Pension Protection Act passed by Congress last summer allows donors to make charitable gifts from their IRAs. If you are 70 ½ years old or older, you can make a gift (up to \$100,000) from your traditional or Roth IRA and the distribution will not be subject to income tax.

Background: At 70 ½, owners of IRAs must begin taking taxable distributions from their plans. (Remember that IRAs were never intended to avoid taxes, only to defer them.) If you don't need to start taking distributions, or if you don't need the entire amount mandated by minimum distribution formulas, you may find it more advantageous to use your IRA as a source of funds to make charitable gifts.

Under current law, this opportunity applies only to gifts made before December 31, 2007.

If you would like to further explore the possibility of supporting Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center, please call our office at (402) 797-2301.



Best Wishes to Ann

Ann Ames, former development associate for Spring Creek Prairie, has taken a new position with the YWCA in Lincoln. Congratulations are in order as well as Ann was selected by the *Midwest Business Journal* as one of their "40 Under 40," an initiative that recognizes young executives who are building a successful future for themselves and others. We wish Ann the best of luck with her new adventures.

Admission/Membership Guidelines

Daily Admission

SCPAC Members	FREE
Adults	\$4
Seniors (60+)	\$3
Students	\$3
Ages 6-17	\$3
Ages 5 and under	FREE
Admission Tuesdays	FREE

National Audubon Society members receive \$1 off admission.

Membership Levels

\$35 - Individual \$60 - Family

SCPAC members receive:

- Unlimited free admission (family membership includes all family members) to education building during open hours.
- Unlimited access to walking trails.
- 10% discount on gift shop purchases.
- Your name listed in donor publications (optional).
- Invitations to special programs and events.

Member levels also include a National Audubon Society membership and a full year of *Audubon* magazine. Memberships last for one year after date of joining.



Discover Nebraska's Grass Roots

Membership

___ Individual (\$35)

___ Family (\$60)

I want to support the conservation and education programs at SCPAC with an additional donation of:

___ \$500

___ \$250

___ \$100

___ \$50

___ \$20

Total gift: \$ _____ Payment: ___ Check enclosed ___ Credit card (MC or Visa)

Card # _____ Exp. date _____

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail (optional) _____

I do not want my name to be acknowledged in print materials.

I do not want the National Audubon Society to add my name to its membership list that it sends to carefully selected organizations whose mailings I might find of interest.

Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center
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www.springcreekprairie.org

Open: Mon.-Fri. 9-5
Sat.-Sun. 1-5
All year, except major holidays
Admission charge

Director: Marian Langan
Education Coordinator: Deb Hauswald
Development Associate: Vacant
Office Manager/Important Bird Areas
Coordinator: Kevin Poague
Habitat Manager: Arnold Mendenhall
On-site Caretaker: Amy Plettner

Stewardship Advisory Board

Robin Bates	Susan Johnson
Bob Campbell	Curt McConnell
Douglas Campbell	Nadine McHenry
Gerry Dimon	Jim Neid
Bill Edwards	Julie Pokorny
Katherine Endacott	Ernie Rousek
Michael Farrell	Keith Schafer
Dick Gray	Trixie Schmidt
Judy Greenwald	Lisa Smith
Matt Harris	Rich Vierk
Barb Hoppe	

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