

# ⌘ Prairie plains Link ⌘



These days we're on the road all over east-central Nebraska harvesting seeds from native prairies, restorations and road ditches. Among the perks of being out: amazing land and sky-scapes, such as this, near Shelby in Polk County.

monthly newsletter  
of



August, 2009

## How Cool

Our seed gathering expeditions have been especially enjoyable this year, thanks to some unseasonably cool temperatures. There's also been plenty of cool photo ops, as we discover all the creatures keeping us company in the prairies - and sometimes competing with us for the seeds!



Left and continuing counterclockwise: Amy Jones with compass plant (*Silphium laciniatum*) at Ducks Unlimited's Verona complex in Clay County - a Wetland Reserve Program site planted by Prairie Plains in 2004; Three from the Lincoln Creek Prairie - garden spider; katydid (look closely!) and grasshopper on pitcher sage (*Salvia azuria*); and monarch butterfly, also on pitcher sage - a very popular hangout for all kinds of insects; robber fly on rosinweed head; three beetles (of undetermined species) compete with each other - and with us - for rosinweed seeds; and a closeup of the rosinweed-loving beetle.



**August Tours:**  
 Years ago Prairie Plains Director Bill Whitney and John Heaston, now Platte River Program Director for The Nature Conservancy (2nd from right in first photo), imagined



an educational touring vehicle for the Platte corridor . . . a "Plattemobile." The idea came to fruition on August 7 when a SOAR-busload of people took part in a TNC/PPRI tour of Nebraska Public Power District and Central Public Power & Irrigation District water projects. The group also heard presentations on grassland and river restoration efforts. Above, right: On August 10-12 The Nature Conservancy held a Grassland Network Restoration Conference in Aurora. Prairie Plains assisted with the conference, leading a tour of its 2004 prairie planting at Ducks Unlimited's Verona complex in Clay County. Participants delighted in the pleasant evening weather and diversity of this planting, while discussing the methods and management challenges of high diversity prairie restorations.

### Approaching Events:

**Thursday, Sept. 17: Third Annual PPRI Prairie Restoration Tour** in the Lincoln area, 9:30 - late afternoon. The tour (by vehicle caravan) begins at 9:30 a.m. at Spring Creek Prairie, approximately three miles south of Denton on SW 98th Street. Bring a lunch; break treats and drinks will be provided. No charge; however donations to cover tour expenses are appreciated. Please RSVP to ppri@hamilton.net.

**Saturday, Sept. 19: Fall Hike & Sullivant's Milkweed Shelling Party at Griffith Prairie**, 2:00-5:00 p.m. Gather at the blue barn in the farmyard. No charge, and refreshments will be provided.

**Saturday, Oct. 3: Fifth Annual Enchanted Trail Event at Olson Nature Preserve**, 7:00-9:30 p.m. at ONP, including guided trail walks, campfire, treats and sing-along. Featured speaker, Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale, will portray "Cactus Jack," an early Nebraskan, to discuss the state's pioneer past as well as the promise of its future. Bring lawn chairs, flashlights and blankets. In case of rain, the event will be held at the Casey's building at the Boone County Fairgrounds. No charge.

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