



FNA News Nov/Dec 2011

Website: www.fermilabnaturalareas.org

Blog: fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com

Contact us at fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com or 630-840-4845

Fermilab Natural Areas (FNA), is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit tax-exempt corporation formed in 2006:

- * to study and restore Fermilab's unique combination of ecological communities
- * to inform and enrich local residents' knowledge of Fermilab (FNAL), and
- * to contribute to the preservation of global biodiversity.

On Facebook? Please "like" us! <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Fermilab-Natural-Areas/207827679253186>

A Message from FNA President Rod Walton fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com or 630-840-2565

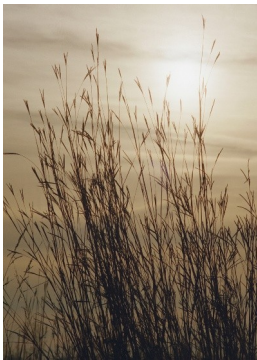
Greetings! Even though summer has disappeared, the work of our volunteers is still going strong! As you can read in this issue, the annual prairie seed harvest was very successful this year, with all three dates blessed by excellent weather and good turnouts.

Please note that our general membership meeting will be here at Fermilab, February 16 at 7 pm in Wilson Hall, One West. As usual, we will have a speaker to talk about a topic that will be of interest to FNA members. We will also hold elections for four seats on the FNA Board of Directors, and we are eager to find those of you who would like to take a more active role in managing our organization. The Board only meets three or four times a year, so the commitment of time is not burdensome.

Finally, we say farewell to Julie Allen, who is on her way to an AmeriCorps assignment in Washington state. I'm sure that Julie will bring the same level of enthusiasm to that project that she has brought to us. We will miss her, but wish her the best!

FNA Calendar of Events

- Nov 3** Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon
- Nov 7** Weekly Brush Cutters inaugural work day, 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#). See article on page 4 for details.
- Nov 14** Weekly Brush Cutters second work day, 1 pm to 3 pm. Same details as Nov 7.
- Nov 19** [Habitat restoration work day](#). 9 am to noon. Meet in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#). Please check http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/prairie/habitat_restoration.html for contact info.
- Nov 21** Weekly Brush Cutters work days, 1 pm to 3 pm. Meet in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#). See our article on page 4 for details.
- Nov 28** [Center parking lot](#). See our article on page 4 for details.
- Dec 1** Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon
- Dec 5** Weekly Brush Cutters work days, 1 pm to 3 pm.
- Dec 12** (no Monday work days from Dec 19 through Jan 9)
- Dec 17** [Fermilab Christmas Bird Count](#), an annual Audubon bird census, on-site.
For more information, contact D. Kania, email: [dkan36 AT wowway DOT com](mailto:dkan36@wowway.com)
- Dec 17** [Habitat restoration work day](#). 9 am to noon. See details for Nov 19.
- Jan 5** Fermilab [ELM Committee](#) meeting, Wilson Hall, One East, noon
- Jan 16** Weekly Brush Cutters work days resume, 1 pm to 3 pm.
- Jan 19** FNA Board of Directors meeting, Wilson Hall, Snake Pit, 7 pm
- Feb 16** **FNA Annual Meeting**, Fermilab's Wilson Hall, room One West, 7 pm. All are welcome!
Please watch your email, [FNA Blog](#), or [Facebook](#) for last-minute changes or additional events.



Fermilab



Fermilab

The October Prairie Seed Harvests *Julie Allen and Ryan Campbell, Fermilab*



The volunteer prairie harvests this year on October 1st and 29th were hugely successful. After days of getting ready, aided by the years of experience of Fermilab's Roads and Grounds crew, both Saturdays saw our volunteers collect more than two dozen plant species. The estimated turnout for Oct. 1 was 120 people, and for Oct. 29 approximately 200 people! We hosted school groups from Geneva, Bartlett, Batavia, [Illinois Math and Science Academy](#), and a group of [AFS exchange students](#). In addition, numerous families, Fermilab employees, Scout groups, and other volunteers joined us in the fine weather of each day. Students from Wheaton-Warrenville High School came on October 15th for their annual volunteer day, when the kids earn service hours for

their Environmental Biology class. Some of the notable species we collected were swamp betony to enhance our Baltimore checkerspot butterfly habitat, and several wetland species such as sneezeweed, Riddell's goldenrod, false aster, and ditch stonecrop to spread over treated reed canary grass. Along with harvesting in the Main Ring prairie, we sent volunteers and guides to the Interpretive Prairie and the Main Injector wetland mitigation site to pick particular species. Our "pickers" were so good that they harvested literally a truckload of seed on each day. Thanks very much to everyone who helped out! An event as big and successful as our three-day harvest depends on the skills and enthusiasm of many people.

Special thanks go to the following folks and groups, some of whom worked as guides, prepared and served lunch, and were available for any and all tasks: Bob Mathieu, Evalyn Campbell, Marlene Rosecrans, Michael Shemanske, Jon Cooper, Jacques Hooymans, Dave Spleha, Tom Peterson, Keith Olson, Eric Keeley, Robert Liva, Johnny Johnson, Kent and Sue Collins, Mike and Rachel Pfaff, Mark Allen, Jolie Macier, Rod Walton, the Batavia Woman's Club, [Lederman Science Center's Junior Prairie Rangers](#), and docents especially Vida Goldstein, Bob Shaw, MaryJo Murphy, and Maureen Hix and the [Eco-Rangers](#).

To see more harvest photos, visit our Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.267378189964801.58433.207827679253186&type=3>



Seed Processing - What Happens AFTER We Harvest It? *Ryan Campbell, Fermilab*

To inspire our volunteer cadre to entrench their interests into our ecology program, we opened up the seed storage facility, and together, got to work. Making space for the influx of seed harvested in October was our main priority. Using screens, hands, dust masks, and even an old hammermill, we put our enjoyment into the processing of prairie, wetland, savanna, and woodland seeds collected over the summer. Each species is quite different in seed size and type of infructescence, so our methods must accommodate. Rudy, a recently recruited volunteer, said "I just want to make sure I am helping along with the process. I want to do a good job, and it is fun too!"



On Columbus Day, we had 15 volunteers join us, including the Lederman Science Center's [Junior Prairie Rangers](#) (photo at left) and a family of six. Son, Colin, helped his younger sister and brother with yellow coneflower, beebalm, and black-eyed Susan.

They enjoyed scrubbing and rubbing seed and desiccated plant tissue through the screens. The processed seed from our summer and fall collections is then ready to be mixed according to ecosystem type and spread this winter, with the help of Lead Groundskeeper Martin Valenzuela. Rudy and others certainly did a good job, and Fermilab Natural Areas thanks them.



Baltimore Checkerspot Habitat at Fermilab *Julie Allen and Jessica Meyers, Fermilab*

With the release of [Baltimore Checkerspot](#) (*Euphydryas phaeton*) butterflies this summer by the [Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum](#), we hope to continue to improve their habitat at Fermilab. These rare butterflies host on specific plant species: foxglove (*Penstemon digitalis*), turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*), swamp betony (*Pedicularis lanceolata*), and mullein foxglove (*Seymeria macrophylla*). In order to increase our knowledge of what their habitat looks like, so we can better manage our site (hopefully with grant funding) we visited nearby Checkerspot locations.

We toured [Dick Young Forest Preserve](#) in Kane County with site steward and FNA volunteer Jacques Hooymans. Tom Peterson, who has been monitoring butterflies at this site for 10 years, showed us his normal route while we counted host plants and noted common associates.

We met with Tom Velat at [Pratt's Wayne Woods](#) in DuPage County for a similar excursion. Tom has been monitoring the butterflies here for six years, and was very informative about his restoration and management experience concerning Checkerspots.

Lastly, we went to Bluff Spring Fen in Elgin, which is an Illinois Nature Preserve, and met with Dr. Doug Taron who has been the steward there for almost 30 years and works with butterflies at the [Notebaert Museum](#). Doug was instrumental in the Checkerspot release at Fermilab, and gave us a tremendous amount of host plant seed and ideas of how to best manage the butterflies' new habitat.

Each of these excursions was very informative for us as land managers, in applying for grants, and in making more solid connections with other local restorationists. A big "thank you" goes to our hosts at each site, and we look forward to collaborating with them in the future!



At left:
Tom Peterson,
Julie Allen,
Jessica Meyers



At right:
Julie Allen,
Bob Lootens,
Tom Velat

Farewell For Now *Julie Allen, Fermilab*

As my fifth fabulous season at Fermilab comes to an end, I'm finding myself a bit sentimental about leaving the lab and its natural areas, and the very knowledgeable people who have taught me almost everything I know about our Illinois landscape. I started at Fermi the summer before I started at DePaul University, and quickly discovered my love for plants while working in the flower beds with Martin Valenzuela. After two seasons of mulching and weeding, I had the opportunity of moving up into the world of the prairie, getting to know it by collecting its many and various seeds. Working alongside Bob Lootens, Ryan Campbell and other interns, botanizing and surveying, harvesting and coordinating volunteers, I've learned the intricacies of the tall grass prairie and the oak woodlands, and that each piece of the puzzle has its season, however short-lived it may be. I've been able to watch the prairie evolve each day, and both drastically and subtly change over three summers. Just this season, we have collected well over one hundred species, organized a dozen volunteer work days, visited numerous other preserves in the area, attended two conferences, held three very successful October seed harvests, and worked with many enthusiastic land managers, stewards, interns, and volunteers. I want to send a HUGE thank you to everybody at Roads and Grounds, specifically Ryan Campbell, Bob Lootens and Mike Becker. A big thanks to the Robert Betz interns over the three years, Courtney Gill ('09), Jessica Meyers ('10), and Sioned Sitkiwicz ('11); the weed-killing team Kevin Sheehan, Mike Beck, and Shirley Xiao; and our amazingly dedicated volunteers Erin Cunningham, Eilene Neuffer, Evalyn Campbell, Bob Mathieu, Marlene Rosecrans, Jacques Hooymans, and everyone else who has taken the time to save a little piece of our prairie. And next year, as I'm tackling my AmeriCorps position in Seattle, Washington with full force, I'll be thinking, "I bet they're looking at the *Lilium philadelphicum* right about now."



Volunteer Opportunities with FNA *Bob Lootens & Julie Allen, Fermilab*

FNA offers many opportunities to help the goals of ecological land management on the Fermilab site. Over 1,000 acres are being actively restored to a healthier ecological state with the help of the Roads & Grounds crew, summer interns, and numerous volunteers. We need help, not only in the field, but also indoors, and we can put almost any skill to work!

Below is a list of activities that you can help us with (we're open to new ideas as well). The work is very flexible and we'll provide the necessary tools and guidance. To contact us about volunteering, please email Ryan Campbell at ryancamp@fnal.gov or Bob Lootens lootens@fnal.gov or call 630-840-3303.

Volunteer activities: Monitoring (amphibians, butterflies, birds, reptiles), Seed Collection, Invasive Species Control, Fund Raising, Publicity and Outreach, Photography and Writing [*newsletter articles or ideas are always welcome! Ed.*], Plant Surveys, Trail Maintenance (including picnic tables, bird houses, benches). We look forward to working with you!

The Weekly Brush Cutters, a New FNA Group *Ryan Campbell, Fermilab*

Looking for an engaging outdoor activity this fall and winter? Think ecological restoration stops when the snow flies? Please join the weekly FNA volunteer group. We will work all across the 6,800 acre Fermilab campus removing invasive shrubs and trees while learning the significance of native plants in the winter landscape. No prior experience is required. Join us each week or simply come when you can. Wear sturdy boots and dress for the weather. In case of bad weather, we'll process and mix native seeds indoors, so please come anyway! We will supply basic hand tools and training. Starting Monday, November 7th and every Monday after, from 1-3 PM. Meet in the Lederman Science Center parking lot. Email Ryan Campbell ryancamp@fnal.gov with questions.

New tools for our efforts, courtesy of Corona Tools!

With the help of FNA Board member [Shawna Coronado](#), FNA will be the recipient of new landscaping tools from [Corona Tools](#). Hand saws and loppers from Corona are scheduled to arrive as this newsletter "goes to print", so the exact type and quantity are unknown, but we expect that they will be gratefully used first by our Brush Cutter Monday volunteers. For more information about Corona's commitment to gardening, the environment, and volunteer community organizations, visit <http://coronacares.webs.com/community.htm>. "Thank You" to Shawna and Corona!

For Sale by FNA Now on-line at <http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/shop.html>

Perfect for changing seasons (and gift giving): FNA long-sleeved or short-sleeved t-shirts! Our logo on the front, web address on the back. Short-sleeved tees: \$15, long-sleeved: \$18. Order yours online (above) or by calling 630-840-4845.

Membership/Donations

<http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/membership.html> by U.S. Mail or online via PayPal

Help us enhance Fermilab's ecology. Members receive the FNA Newsletter via email, are invited to special events such as our anniversary picnic, and get a discount on rain barrel purchases.

FNA is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization. All donations to FNA are tax deductible.

Donations can be made in memory or honor of a friend or loved one.

Fermilab employees can donate online via the [Employee Self Service website](#).

Benefactor	\$2,500 and up	Sponsor	\$100
Patron	\$1,000	Contributor	\$50
Supporter	\$500	Member	\$25
Donor	\$250	Student/Youth	\$15

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Donation \$ _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Please mail your check or money order to:

Fermilab Natural Areas
P.O. Box 500, MS 444
Batavia, IL 60510

