

# Newsletter Sept/Oct 2010



[www.fermilabnaturalareas.org](http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org)

[fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com](http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com)

Contact us at [fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## *A Message from FNA President Rod Walton* [fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com](mailto:fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com)

Greetings! It seems almost impossible that with this edition of the newsletter, we're into Fall! Of course, that signals that it is time to start thinking about our "Premier Event", the annual Fall Prairie Seed Harvest. Check out the information on this event, especially on page 3. Plan to come to the harvest this year and take the opportunity to get into the prairie, learn about some of the more desirable species, and enjoy a picnic lunch for your efforts.

Now that the summer is winding down, it's time to appreciate all the work that gets done in the natural areas at Fermilab each year by enthusiastic summer students. This edition contains stories about their efforts, including the Fermilab Natural Areas 2010 Betz intern, Jessica Meyers. These students provide an invaluable boost to the many tasks necessary to maintain the natural areas, and also come up with many new and promising ideas about restoration and conservation of the site.

Finally, don't forget to renew your membership if it's time, and it is not too early to start thinking about (I hate to say this ...) FNA logo T-shirts as holiday gifts!

As usual, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to [email \(above\)](mailto:fermilabnaturalareas@gmail.com), or call me at 630-840-2565. Be sure to keep up with our activities on our [Blog](#).

## *FNA Calendar of Events*

- Sept 18** [Habitat restoration work day](#) Meet at 9 am in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#), work 'til Noon.  
Also see the FNA Blog entry at:  
<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2010/08/habitat-restoration.html>
- Oct 2** Prairie Seed Harvest, 10 am to 2 pm. Lunch provided.  
For details, see our article on page 3.
- Oct 16** [Habitat restoration work day](#) Meet at 9 am in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#), work 'til Noon.
- Oct 21** FNA Board meeting, 2 Northeast, Wilson Hall, 7 pm. All are welcome to come.
- Oct 30** Prairie Seed Harvest, 10 am to 2 pm. Lunch provided.  
For details, see our article on page 3.
- Nov 20** [Habitat restoration work day](#) Meet at 9 am in the [Lederman Science Center parking lot](#), work 'til Noon.

Watch your email or the [FNA Blog](#) for last-minute announcements from FNA about changes in plans, or additional events.



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## Overview of Past Events

**Butterfly Walks** - Tom Peterson led noontime and afternoon walks in July and August for those people brave enough to battle the mosquitoes. Some butterflies were observed on their favorite plants from afar, while others were netted by Tom and captured briefly in a glass jar for study. Not to worry, the lid had holes in it, and no butterflies were harmed in this endeavor!



**Sunset on the Prairie** - Evening walks were led by Ryan Campbell, with mixed success in July and August. The weather did not cooperate for July, threatening rain all afternoon, reducing the turnout to two people. Mosquitoes tormented the August attendees, but prairie plants such as Cream Gentian, Obedient Plant, and towering Compass Plants did their best to provide a pleasing distraction.

## Around the Fermilab Site

### **The Turtle Report, or “Herps Demand Equal Time”; Mike Beck and Kevin Sheehan, Fermilab**



As a side project from our normal restoration and invasive management duties, we conducted a site wide turtle survey, looking specifically for the endangered [Blanding's Turtle](#). Over the summer, we used catch and release traps in an attempt to find the Blanding's on site, and to also record and study the general diversity and health of different turtle populations that we have at Fermilab. By the end of the study in mid August, we had trapped 48 turtles comprising three species ([Painted](#), [Common Snapper](#), [Red-Eared Slider](#)), sighted one other ([Spiny Softshell](#)), but had not seen any Blanding's. Through this data we have been able to better understand the populations and presence of turtle species at Fermilab. Although we have been disappointed in not catching the Blanding's or seeing a larger diversity of turtle species than we expected on site, the populations that we do have seem healthy and stable. Few of the trapped turtles had injuries or parasites, and there was a diversity of age groups. Overall, we have had an educational and exciting experience in the study of Fermilab's turtles.



### **Wrapping Up Our Summer on the Prairie; Julie Allen, Fermilab**



It has been a fruitful and educational summer for the prairie interns. So far, we've collected dozens of species around Fermilab from the woods, wetlands, and prairie. Our wonderful volunteers have helped us collect Bottlebrush Grass and Dark Green Bulrush among other species, and we are very grateful for their help. We monitored Goldenseal for [Plants of Concern](#), (a program coordinated by the [Chicago Botanic Garden](#)) and will monitor the population of Savanna Blazing Star when it blooms in the next couple of weeks. One of the more exciting events this summer was the discovery of two more new plants for the lab: Missouri Ironweed [left] in the Main Ring Savanna, and Pointed Tick Trefoil in the Big Woods. As usual, it has been a fascinating and beautiful growing season, during which we've learned a little bit more about the natural world.



## The Prairie Seed Harvest - Our Premier Event!

Join us for the annual Prairie Seed Harvests on Saturday October 2 and October 30.



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All ages and abilities are welcome and greatly appreciated to spend a day in the autumn [prairie at Fermilab](#), and help us collect the bulk of our seed for the year. This year the harvests will be held in both the [Main Ring](#) and the [Interpretive Trail prairie](#) on Pine Street. Please watch for directional signs as you enter the Fermilab site. Due to a scorching fire that the Roads and Grounds crew burned through the area this spring, the Interpretive Trail prairie boasts a high amount of plant diversity. On both Saturdays, the event will be from 10 am until 2 pm, and a hot dog lunch will be served. Bathrooms will be available, as will parking at the Lederman Education Center or in the Main Ring. Please bring your own gloves, clippers, and containers such as paper bags (especially with handles) or buckets if you have them.

Do not be deterred if you are not a plant expert! Fermilab staff and volunteers will be there to show you what and where to collect. Overall, this is a great social event to enjoy the outdoors and maybe learn a bit about the prairie. We can't do it without you, so tell your friends and family! Please let us know if you are bringing a big group so we can be sure to accommodate everyone: email [lootens@fnal.gov](mailto:lootens@fnal.gov). You may enter [the site](#) from either the east (Batavia Rd) or west (Pine Street) gate, please [have photo ID ready](#). Call the Fermilab switchboard in case of bad weather, 630-840-3000. *Hope to see you there!*



Visit these web pages to get a taste of last year's seed harvest:

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2009/09/species-of-prairie-harvest.html>

<http://fermilabnaturalareas.blogspot.com/2009/10/harvest-photos.html>

Here's the flyer to share:

[http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/prairie/pdfs/Volunteer\\_Harvest\\_flier2010.pdf](http://www.fnal.gov/pub/about/campus/ecology/prairie/pdfs/Volunteer_Harvest_flier2010.pdf)

### **Our [2010 Betz Intern](#) says Goodbye; Jessica Meyers, FNA**

It is so hard to believe that my time as the Betz intern at Fermilab Natural Areas has already come to a close! Within the first week I had spent time in the woods and prairie collecting native species such as Pussytoes, Wood Betony, Bloodroot, and assisted with plant surveying. All of these things were what I had always wanted to do in other positions but didn't have the opportunity to; from there the fun continued! Other highlights included [butterfly walks](#) with Tom Peterson, seed harvesting with our amazing volunteers, hand pollinating Prairie Lilies, finding new plants like Stout Blue-eyed Grass for various tracts, botanizing the site at every chance, and surveying (which on a consistent basis, is a fantastic tool to learn and keep fresh the botanical names of plants). Field trips with the rest of the "Prairie Sweatbox Crew", as we were nicknamed, included an edge prairie in [Elmhurst](#), black soil prairie at [Gensburg-Markham](#), and of course Morton Arboretum's [Schulenburg Prairie](#). I was even able to lend a hand with non-chemical invasive species removal of White Sweet Clover and Teasel, as well as interact with nearby school teachers and park districts, and local experts like Ron Panzer.



J. Meyers

In closing, I went into this assuming that I'd decide whether to get my Masters in Ecology or not. Instead, I came out of it with a multitude of other ideas. Now I'm leaning toward getting my certification as a Naturalist, with a little nature photography on the side. On top of that, on a daily basis I was given the privilege to work with a tremendous group of people here at Fermilab who are generous with their knowledge, time, patience, and sense of humor. Thank you!



## Eagle Scout Project Benefits Main Ring Visitors



Picnic tables in the Main Ring Prairie are in better shape, courtesy of a local Boy Scout who was fulfilling his Eagle Scout leadership service project requirements. Last fall, Scout Samuel Schlicher of Batavia organized a group of Scouts to help him, and secured the necessary materials for refurbishing. He and the other young men made minor repairs, cleaned, sanded and painted the fourteen 8-foot long picnic tables used annually for the Volunteer Prairie Seed Harvest.

Fermilab Today featured an extensive article about the project prior to its completion. See [http://www.fnal.gov/pub/today/archive\\_2009/today09-10-20.html](http://www.fnal.gov/pub/today/archive_2009/today09-10-20.html) for the details.

## For Your Reference

For the latest on bird sightings, see <http://www.fnal.gov/ecology/wildlife/diary.shtml>

Tom Peterson writes about butterflies:

<http://tdserver1.fnal.gov/peterson/tom/Butterflies/RecentSightings.html>

For help with plant identification, see the website created by the Fermilab Science Education Office:

[http://eddata.fnal.gov/lasso/plant\\_search/search\\_kids.html](http://eddata.fnal.gov/lasso/plant_search/search_kids.html)

## For Sale by FNA

FNA still has long and short sleeved T-shirts! Order yours by calling us at 630-840-4845.

Short-sleeved shirts are \$15 and long-sleeved are \$18.

Both sport the FNA logo on the front, and our website on the back.



## **Membership/Donations**     <http://www.fermilabnaturalareas.org/membership.html>

Come help us enhance Fermilab's ecology.

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

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

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Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your check or money order to: Fermilab Natural Areas  
P.O. Box 500, MS 444  
Batavia, IL 60510

**Thank you!**

