

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE



Docent Newsletter - - - -

April 1997

This n' That - Mary McIntyre, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Greetings from the Tulsa Field Office. Thanks to lots of work by Sue Wheeler, Doris Mayfield and Marilyn Keefer, the Gift Shop opened on March 16! We appreciate you! At the Reorientation, Sue shared many of the wonderful new items which will now be carried in the gift shop. Take a minute to check it out when you arrive.

Also, don't forget that you may show the headquarters (dining room only, please) in brief tours at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Don't take the chains down, and remember to check the floor and clean up at the end of the day if you need to! Our visitors enjoy seeing this unique house, but it is up to you, our docents, to keep the floor clean so that tours can continue.

As of today, I have 24 names on the new docent list! Training dates for new docents will be April 5 (Pawhuska Senior Citizens Center) and April 19 (Preserve). These new docents are from:

Bartlesville	11
Broken Arrow	1
Hominy	1
Ponca City	1
Pawhuska	1
Sapulpa	2
Sand Springs	1
Tulsa	6

These new docents will begin working with veterans in May, so plan to work with a "trainee" during your shift that month!

MAY 17 will be a special training day, so get it on your calendar! Mary Barnard Lawrence will be speaking at the Headquarters at 10:30 a.m. about her experiences growing up on the ranch! It should be a special opportunity to hear some wonderful stories. In addition, we will offer spring wildflower training in the afternoon, so bring a sack lunch, your field guide, and let's stay all day! If we get some good spring rains, the flowers should be beautiful by then. The baby bison will be frisking around. What a great day!

Hope to see you soon!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary".

Visitation - George Meyers

February visitation totaled 288 sign-ins, including 75 from other states and six from other countries. The out-of-state visitors came from 18 other states, and the foreign visitors from five different countries. So far in 1997, we have had visitors from 26 states and 10 foreign countries.

Gift Shop Report - Sue Wheeler

Many new items are now available in the gift shop! If you didn't attend reorientation, take a minute when you arrive at the shop and look at what's new. Also, remember to check your totals when you have made up your purchase receipt! Due to addition mistakes, we are already \$'s in the hole! Somebody got a really good deal! Please be careful and take your time!

Trail Guide Program -

If you are interested in the Trail Guide Program, please fill out your questionnaire! So far, sixteen of you have expressed a desire to be trained for the program. Training will be held April 20 at the Preserve. Those participating may spend the night before on site at the Stucco House, camping or on bunks or sleeping porch. We'll have dinner in town (on your own); but food will be provided for Sunday. Training will start early Sunday morning (8:30?) and continue until mid-afternoon. We'll study methods of interpretation, questioning techniques, and then spend a lot of time in pairs or small groups on the trails, perfecting presentations. Those who have signed up will soon receive a letter and RSVP card. Return the card to confirm your bedding arrangement for April 19, and food needs for Sunday.

Notes from the Prairie -Harvey Payne, Director.

Welcome back, Docents!! The bison are grazing all over the bison unit in many small bands. The cows will be alone when calving, which has probably begun. Last year, the first calf we know of was born March 13! The bison will soon begin to shed their heavy winter coats.

Three controlled burns were conducted at the preserve in mid-March. The cowboys are involved in the burning, and also in fence building. The Cowboy Plaque has been moved from the main information display case, so that case can now be used for other Preserve info. Ideas are welcome.

The first spring flowers are blooming, and so are the plum trees. Redbuds will be flowering soon. The eagles have gone north; the turkey vultures are back. Spring rains are needed!

Docent Driving Puzzle -

Don't look back, but was that an emu I just saw? And, by the way, exactly how do you spell the name of that town southeast of Pawhuska? It's an interesting journey from Tulsa to the Preserve. Tom Clark has created a driving puzzle to keep you entertained. Here's the challenge: Return your puzzle with the most correct answers, and win a prize! You'll find your puzzle included in this mailing. Contest deadline is May 31. Winners will be announced in the July newsletter, which will also include the answer key. Have fun!

Scheduling - Shirley Miller

Thanks to all of you who are getting such a great start on scheduling yourselves in. We seem to be having trouble filling Fridays. This is one of our HIGHEST visitation days! Please help us be sure this is covered. We would rather have Tuesdays and Thursdays empty than not cover a Friday! We need your help! Check the April and May calendars! Remember, our new docents will be joining in, working with experienced docents in May and June. We may schedule one or two new docents to work with you on your shift, and will try to get that info to you as soon as we have names. We would like to cover seven days per week beginning in May!

Looking ahead to June: many Fridays and Sundays are open in June. Please check your calendars and sign up! Thanks!

Natural History Highlight: Wild Plums

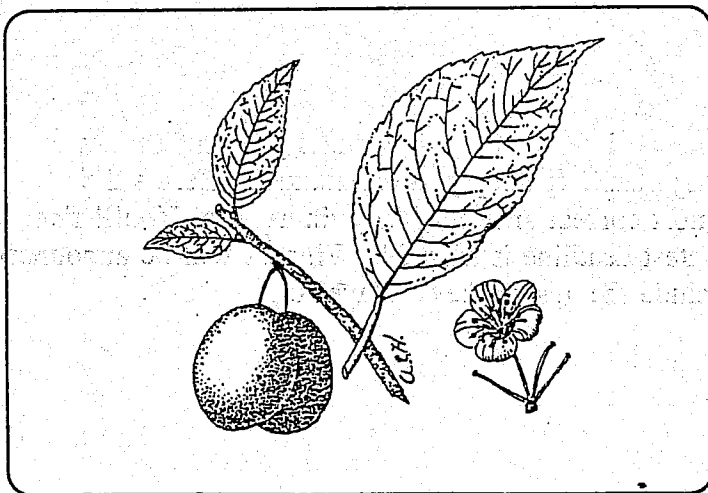
The plum trees that are found here at the Preserve are wild American plums (*Prunus americana*.) They spread into large thickets by suckering outward from their roots. Their fruit doesn't ripen until October, but right now, their white blossoms smell like corn tortillas! Peaches, cherries, almonds and apricots are also members of the genus *Prunus*.

Habitat: Wild plums are occasionally part of the forest understory layer, and occasionally grow in prairies. Most typically, they are pioneers in old fields and thickets or along the edges where habitats meet. In spring, their lacy white blooms often call to mind flowering dogwoods that bloom in, and are native to, eastern Oklahoma.

Typical members of the Rose family, plum flowers usually have 5 green sepals and 5 white petals (flowering dogwood has 4 large white bracts) with a lot of stamens in the center. The single pistil or ovary develops into a hard pit in the center of the fruit. The botanical term for a fleshy fruit with a hard central pit is a drupe*. Our native plums produce flowers and fruits in clusters of 3 or more on long stalks.

Our wild plums are bright red when they are ripe. Sometimes they are not ripe when they turn red in response to an insect attack. If the fruit must be tugged off its tree, or if it is rock hard or rotten soft, it won't have the sweetly tart flavor of a sun-ripened wild plum. Plum fruits may be covered with a dusty white powder; this wild yeast is usually bitter. Just wash or wipe it off.

*Note: A blackberry is not really a berry (but a tomato is!): it is a cluster of drupes.



(When space allows, this Natural History feature will be included in the newsletter. If there is a species of plant or animal native to the prairie which you would like to have featured, let me know!)

Is your name listed on this calendar? If it is, check your calendar, mark the date down, and show up at the Preserve! To change a day, or schedule a day, call SHirley Miller at 555-5349. You may also select a first and second choice of open days, mark them on the calendar, and return the calendar to Shirley at 4635 E. 13th Pl., Tulsa, OK 74112. Thanks!

April

1997

1997

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Doris Mayfield Phyllis Connally	2 Dean and Mary Ellen Johnston	3 Vera Meyers George Meyers	4 Stu Marshall Barbara Strahm	5 Sherry Beeker Dorothy Buck NEW DOCENT TRAINING
6 Nune and Tom Richards Justin Lovelace	7 George McCourt Carol Mento	8	9 Judy Barto Roberta Wherritt	10	11 Laban Miles *2.	12 Louise Magruder Barbara Marashi
13 Edith Haraughty Karen Harris	14 Van and Loretta Vives	15 Lila Briery Joan Fuller	16 Floyd and Virginia Pharris	17 Randy and Nyla Woody	18 Barbara Strahm Jo Brooks	19 Sue Wheeler Sherry Beeker NEW DOCENT TRAINING
20 Marilyn Fugate William Mosier TRAIL GUIDE TRAINING	21 Al and Liz Medley	22	23 Dave Dolcater Vada Robertson	24 Bill Rinehart George Meyers	25 Carol Eames *2.	26 Carolyn Mathews Alan Beckert
27 Barbara and Don Sweeney	28 Bob and Mary Reeves	29	30 Marilyn Keefer Iris McPherson			

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May

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 *1. *2.	2 Stu Marshall *2.	3 Louise Magruder Bill Dinger
4 Renee and Gary Weyl	5 Barbara Strahm *2.	6 Doris Mayfield Phyllis Connally	7 Dean and Mary Ellen Johnston	8 Dick and Sally Baker	9 Jo Brooks Carol Eames	10 Carolyn Mathews Justin Lovelace
11 Sandy Frazier *2.	12 Van and Loretta Vives	13 Lila Brierly Joan Fuller	14 Judy Barto Roberta Wherritt	15 Randy and Nyla Woody	16 Edith Haraughty *2.	17 George Meyers Dorothy Buck MARY BARNARD LAWRENCE & Wildflower Training
18 William Mosier Karen Harris	19 Liz and Al Medley	20 *1. *2.	21 Dave Dolcater Sue Wheeler	22 Alan Beckert *2.	23 Ken and Shirley Miller	24 David and Betty Turner
25 Don and Barbara Sweeney	26 Bob and Mary Reeves	27 *1. *2.	28 Marilyn Keefer Iris McPherson	29 Bill Rinehart *2.	30 *1. *2.	31 Mary Cumming Carol Redford

Is your name listed on this calendar? If it is, check your calendar, mark the date down, and show up at the Preserve! To change a day, or schedule a day, call Shirley Miller at 836-5349. You may also select a first and second choice of open days, mark them on the calendar, and return the calendar to Shirley at 4635 E. 13th Pl., Tulsa, OK 74112. Thanks!

June

1997

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1*1. 1*2.	2 George McCourt Barbara Strahm	3 Phyllis Connally Doris Mayfield	4 Dean and Mary Ellen Johnston	5 Floyd and Virginia Phariss	6 Stu Marshall *2.	7*1. *2.
8*1. *2.	9 Loretta and Van Vives	10 Barbara and Don Sweeney	11 Roberta Wherritt *2.	12*1. *2.	13*1. *2.	14 Karen Harris Louis Magruder
15*1. *2.	16 Al and Liz Medley	17 Lila Brierley Joan Fuller	18 Dave Dolcater Sue Wheeler	19 Randy and Nyla Woody	20*1. *2.	21 Goerge Meyers Carolyn Mathews
22 Sandy Frazier *2.	23 Bob and Mary Reeves	24*1. *2.	25 Marilyn Keefer Iris McPherson	26 Bill Rinehart *2.	27*1. *2.	28*1. *2.
29*1. *2.	30*1. *2.					