

PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK



Planting until the sun goes down: The second restoration project of 2014 was a 130-acre Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) planting in Rock County.



Seeding into snow has proven to be an effective method. Seeds absorb the warmth of the sun and sink down into the snow, becoming incorporated into the soil and ready to grow with the spring thaw and rains.

Stewardship Season - The spring months (beginning now) will be hopping with weed tree clearing at Marie Ratzlaff Prairie Preserve, Pearl Harbor Survivors Preserve, Olson Nature Preserve (ONP) and Griffith Prairie - and with as many as nine prescribed burns. These include parts of Griffith, Ratzlaff, Lincoln Creek, The Leadership Center restorations, Pearl Harbor Survivors, ONP and Bader Park. The most critical factor for success will be wind: not too much, not too little, and the right direction. We shall see . . .



NEWSLETTER
February, 2014



Time to warm things up!

New life is thriving in the greenhouse, including (far right) Sullivant's milkweed. Thousands of seedlings will soon be ready for transplanting into containers (in background). These will, in turn, find their way to multiple sites in central and eastern Nebraska.



Looking forward to these SUMMER events!

Griffith Prairie Fun Run - Saturday, June 7

Sioux County Ranch Gathering in Harrison, Nebraska - Saturday, June 14

SOAR, Big Bend Camp - June 16-19 & June 23-26

Youth Naturalist Program - June 23-27

SOAR, Aurora Camp - July 7-11 & July 14-18

[Details of all events at prairieplains.org.](http://prairieplains.org)

The first annual run of “Winter Explore Days!” - a collaborative project of Prairie Plains and Bader Park, coordinated by Sarah Bailey and Pat Carlson - was a great beginning! The first of the three days was held Jan. 11 at Bader Park (mentioned in the January *Link*).

The second was on Feb. 1 at Griffith Prairie, a chilly but enjoyable hike around the perimeter of the preserve, taking in the beautiful Platte River Bluffs while learning a bit about how animals and plants survive the harsh Nebraska winters.

The third and final Winter Explore Day was held at Bader Park on Feb. 22. The families that participated enjoyed rare beautiful weather while hiking to the Platte to view early migratory water-fowl. Afterwards they learned how to make a small winter shelter and how to build a campfire, with Prairie Plains volunteer Alex Briner. The fire was put to good use, as the group made lunches of hot dogs and s’mores!



Feb. 1 - Highlights of the hike around Griffith Prairie were observing Eastern Bluebirds and viewing the Platte (below).



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Maintaining and restoring Nebraska ecosystems - Creating opportunities for education, research, stewardship and community development.

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The Essential Prairie: The deep, extensive root system of the perennial native grass-land vegetation not only holds the soil, preventing erosion; it also builds the soil, enriching it with organic matter as roots break down.

Feb. 22 Winter Explore. From above, clockwise: Young Explorer admiring the demo shelter built by Alex Briner; building their own, with Alex’s help; the completed Explorers’ shelter; Alex demonstrating fire starting with steel and flint - followed by the ceremonial roasting of hotdogs and marshmallows.



Coming up:
Guided Hike
Griffith Prairie

Saturday, March 8
7:00 a.m.