



Sarah Bailey

# Prairie plains Link

Platte River environs as viewed by participants at the November 13<sup>th</sup> Bader Park walking tour.

monthly newsletter  
of



November, 2010

## While Visions of Thousands of Seedlings Dance in Our Heads . . .

Since completing the fall harvest in October we have concentrated on solar greenhouse construction at the Griffith Prairie farmstead. The concrete foundation was poured in July by Willis General Contracting,

and Bill Whitney has since completed construction design details of the lean-to structure on the south side of the Morton steel building (a.k.a. Blue Barn). He and Amy Jones began framing construction in early November, using lumber recycled from the Education Center barn project. Rafter and greenhouse glazing panels of polycarbonate twin wall plastic will be constructed in December, followed by insulation and finish details.



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Immediate goals of this one-year project are to grow seedlings of prairie violets (*Viola pedatifida* and *V. pratincola*) - important species for regal fritillary butterflies - and many other rare or difficult to establish species which will be transplanted into our restoration areas. We will also plant seed production plots around the greenhouse.

In January and February, Sarah Bailey will be organizing the potting materials and seeds, which she finished processing in November, and will plant a few thousand seedlings to set out in 2011. The greenhouse



Amy Jones



Sarah Bailey



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growing process will continue in years to come, with increasing numbers of people – interns and others – involved.

This project has been funded with a matching grant from a \$25,000 State Wildlife Grant (SWG) administered by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The local Hamilton Community Foundation provided \$15,000 match, which paid for the concrete floor in the Morton and will contribute some greenhouse expenses; the remainder of match (50:50) will be provided by Prairie Plains contributions of staff time and materials.



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When not building the greenhouse, we've been - you guessed it - processing and mixing seed. Planting has already begun.

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is a publication of



- an educational land trust incorporated in 1980 as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization based in Aurora, NE.

**MISSION:**  
Maintaining and restoring  
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Creating opportunities for  
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Link Editor & Layout  
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Photos by Prairie Plains staff  
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Sarah found (and photographed) this wolf spider, who'd taken up winter residence in the Blue Barn. The large, hairy spider doesn't build a web, but rather hunts for its prey - or just waits at its burrow for a tasty morsel to happen along. It is a beneficial species, helping keep insect numbers under control.



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The Downy Woodpecker is one of the sights you might see at the  
**Winter Bird Hike at Bader Park**  
**Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m.**  
Refreshments following  
at the Bader House



**IT'S NOT ICING ON THE CAKE.**

**It's essential sustenance.**

**Please remember Prairie Plains in your year-end giving!**

We rely on the support of our members to sustain all of our work: maintaining prairie preserves, restoring wetland and prairie habitats, continuing development of SOAR and other educational programs and building an education center that will substantially increase the scope of all activities. All contributions, no matter the size, are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated. Consider gift memberships - they're not fattening, and are guaranteed to fit and not go out of style. You can order online at [www.prairieplains.org](http://www.prairieplains.org). Thank you - and Happy Holidays!

