

Upcoming Events

3rd Annual GHF Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 16, 2015 10:00 am – 1:30 pm
Lawrence Public Library Lawn 707 Vermont St, Lawrence, KS

Native wildflowers and grasses are beautiful, hardy, and can thrive in home landscapes - and pollinators love them! Support GHF as we sell a variety of wildflowers and grasses that would be great for your yard! We'll have butterfly milkweed, spider milkweed, black-eyed susans, upright coneflower, blue sage, Indian grass, prairie dropseed and many, many more. Landscape and prairie experts will be on hand to help you choose your plants and give advice on how to plant them. Large flowered primrose will be available for sale. We'll have fuchildren's activities, too! n

GHF Members, order ahead of time and we'll put your order together for you! Just show up, pay, and take your plants home. Contact us at grasslandheritage@gmail.com or 785-840-8104 for more information.



Oenothera macrocarpa

Advanced Native Materials Basketry Workshop with Wade Myslivy

Saturday, April 18th 9:30 am - 11:30 am
Theater Room, Union Pacific Depot, 402 North 2nd Street, Lawrence, KS

Join GHF and ancestral arts expert Wade Myslivy as we host the 2nd of two basketry workshops using local plant materials. Wade is self-trained in many ancestral arts including cordage and primitive textile arts, basketry, bowery, hide tanning, and tool construction. This is a great opportunity to learn about some of the traditional uses of many of our local plant species and the best techniques for turning them in to usable vessels.

Because the Advanced Basketry Workshop will focus on more challenging basketry construction techniques, it is recommended that participants in this class have some experience in basket making or have attended previous workshops. An RSVP is required to Kim Bellemere at grasslandheritage@gmail.com. This class has been rescheduled from February when it was postponed due to the weather. Preference will be given to those individuals who were previously enrolled in the workshop.



“Go Native” Restored Prairie Tour

Saturday, May 30 (June 6 rain date) 8:45 am – 12:00 pm (Follows 3 sessions of Go Native: From Plain to Prairie Workshop Series: Steps to Restore, Manage, and Maintain Prairie on your Property)

Join GHF and the Douglas County Conservation District as we tour two properties in Douglas County that have restored prairies that range in size, years since establishment, and plant species composition. The tour will be led by Frank Norman, GHF's Snyder Preserve Manager, and Brad Guess, owner of the Guess Prairie.

Tour participants will view small tracts of prairies that were restored 9, 12+, and 21 years ago and for comparison, the Guess Prairie, an unplowed, prairie hay meadow. The tour leaders will discuss their prairie establishment goals, seed mixes used in their restorations, and strategies to manage their prairies. They will review (and you will see firsthand) how their prairies compare to the Guess Prairie. The tour sites occur on two properties found less than a mile apart on the same country road so this is a great opportunity to see several, distinctly different, restored prairies without traveling a long distance. We will meet at the SE corner of the Wal-Mart parking lot at 6th and Wakarusa in Lawrence at 8:45 am and car pool to the first site, arriving at 9:00 am. An RSVP is required to Kim Bellemere, at grasslandheritage@gmail.com. If we have to postpone because of inclement weather, we will contact participants via email either the night before or very early on the morning of May 30.

President's Column

I'm excited to serve as 2015 President of Grassland Heritage Foundation. I'm following Craig Freeman, who served excellently as President in 2014. While it's not our preference to see less of Craig as he focuses on other major projects, we're all looking forward to seeing the results of his hard work. One of those is available now—the 2015 updated *Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds* by Craig, Michael John Haddock and Janet E. Bare.

The transition in GHF officers is made easier by our part-time GHF crew. Kim Bellemere, Education and Volunteer Coordinator, and Frank Norman, Property Manager, do a great job of the educational and on-the-ground work that is all critical to effective land conservation.

Speaking of transitions, let's not transition to a world without Monarch butterflies! Monarch Watch Director, Chip Taylor, and staff member Angie Babbit serve on the GHF board. As the fate of the prairie and monarchs are linked, populations of monarchs have declined as their habitat has been reduced. Monarch Watch has made it clear that 2015 is the year to plant milkweeds, the host plant of Monarch butterflies. I've been increasing the milkweeds in my yard, and this year I'll put extra effort into it. They're as attractive as they are important—just take a look at the cover of Craig's new book.

We helped sponsor Douglas Tallamy's lecture on the value of native plants, hosted by Monarch Watch, on March 20. He spoke of the vast ecosystem services provided by native plants, compared with Bradford pear and other exotic species that do little to support life here. Oaks, he said, are ecosystem service powerhouses, as they nurture a huge number of species of birds, insects, and more. What about prairie plants, though? Which prairie plants might provide the greatest ecosystem services? I would expect a grass to rank high, since the vast underground biomass of grass roots sequesters lots of carbon, stabilizes the soil, and aids water infiltration. If I had to choose a forb, the diversity among them makes the inquiry challenging, yet fun. Milkweeds provide nectar, yes, but they don't house or feed as diverse a number of species as oaks. The urgency of the Monarch butterfly's plight, however, elevates the role of milkweeds for me.

During 2014, Craig led GHF through the start of a strategic planning process to better describe and focus our activities. I'm hoping to continue that effort and to boost our fundraising activities in 2015. What do you want to do for the prairie in 2015? Let's all work together to be as effective as possible. Donations to GHF are always one option—your donations can turn directly into new awareness of the prairie and improved acres of prairie. *Andrea Repinsky* adheron@yahoo.com

***Correction: In our December 2014 issue, on page 6, in the Sue's Sioux Quartzite article, the glaciers occurred 700,000 years ago, not million. It is correct later in the long online version of the story.

Grassland Heritage Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) membership organization dedicated to prairie preservation and education.

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GHF Officers

President: Andrea Repinsky
Vice-President: Megan Withiam
Secretary: Sue Holcomb
Treasurer: Steve Holcomb
Assistant to the Treasurer:
Kevin Bachkora

The 1st Basketry Workshop with Wade Myslivy

Working with bulrushes, various sedges, willow, milkweed and dogbane.

More photos on our Facebook page!
www.facebook.com/GrasslandHeritageFoundation



GHF Board for 2015 present at Annual Meeting



Front Row (L to R): Rex Powell, Jennifer Dropkin, Sue Holcomb, Angie Babbit, Kim Bellemere (Education Coordinator) and Chip Taylor. Back Row: Gary Tegtmeier, Andrea Repinsky, Frank Norman, Jonathan Wilson, Mike Campbell, Megan Withiam, and Steve Holcomb. Not pictured: Craig Freeman and Tom Hammer. *Photo by Angie Babbit.*

The GHF Board for 2015 presented at the annual meeting on February 14. Other board members who were at the Seed Fair that day included Jeff Hansen and Joyce Wolf.

We'd like to offer a special thanks to Craig Freeman who has been on the GHF Board since 2003. Even before that, Dr. Freeman led wildflower walks and offered his expertise on native plants. He served on the property management committee during the period that we were developing a management manual for Snyder Prairie. Last year he led the group as President. He will continue to offer his expertise as his busy schedule allows.

Thanks also to Tom Hammer who joined the board in April of 2005. He has been our contact with the Topeka Parks & Rec Department. Thanks to Tom for recruiting our new member, Jonathan Wilson. Jonathan is working as a naturalist for the department. He comes to us via K-State and works in central Kansas and Montana on prairies. Myron Leinwetter also has left the board but will still be helping with Groundhogs at Snyder Prairie. Thank you.

The 2nd Monday of every other month will continue to be our board meeting day. We met March 9 and upcoming meetings will be May 11, July 13, September 14, and November 9, location to be determined. The meetings will be from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Committee meetings will be needed as well, usually in the off months.

If you're interested in joining us, please contact us at grasslandheritage@gmail.com.



Participants at the second workshop.
Photo by Jennifer Dropkin

Go Native: From Plain to Prairie Workshop Series: Workshop #3: Prairie Management & Controlling Invasive Species

Thursday, April 9th 6:30 pm

Lawrence Public Library 707 Vermont St, Lawrence, Kansas

This session features two of our members, Frank Norman and Craig Freeman. Frank of Norman Ecological Consulting will be discussing ongoing prairie management and Craig will speak on identifying and controlling invasive species.

As our understanding of the importance of native habitat grows, many small landowners are looking to restore prairie on their properties. The workshops in this series, hosted in partnership with the Douglas County Conservation District,

will help landowners identify what plants are already growing on their property, how to conduct a restoration, and how to manage their newly restored prairie.

The series also features information about the restoration resources and tools available from area agencies. The workshops are meant for small rural landowners and are not aimed at teaching participants how to use native plants in a home garden. An RSVP is requested to Jenica Nelson at 785-843-4260, Ext. 3 or Jenica.nelson@ks.nacdnet.net.

Looking at Books

by Joyce Wolf

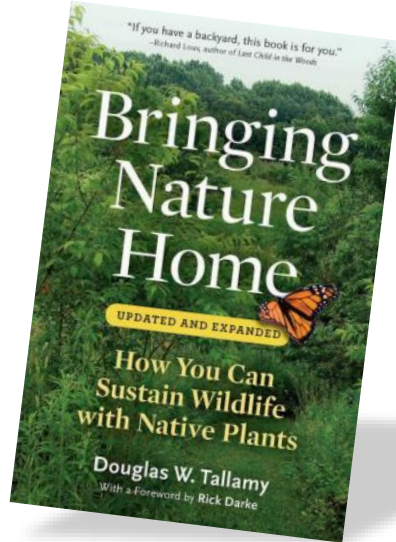
Grassland Heritage Foundation was one of several co-sponsors which brought Dr. Douglas Tallamy, professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, to the University of Kansas to speak about "Restoring Nature by Restoring Nature at Home." He is the author of *Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants* which was first published in 2007 and since has been updated and reprinted several times. (See a review in GHF's November 2013 newsletter.) He also co-authored *The Living Landscape* which was published in 2014 by Timber Press.

Not only is Dr. Tallamy a very informative and interesting writer, but he also gives an amazingly fascinating talk, richly illustrated with photographs of numerous caterpillars, upon which his thesis rests. That is, if you are interested in enriching biodiversity in your yard and gardens, it is vital to understand that 96% of terrestrial species depend on caterpillars and insects for sustenance. Not all of these terrestrial species prey directly upon caterpillars or spiders for their food, but they prey on species that do use caterpillars and spiders as their food supply. So, to build biodiversity, we need to rebuild those relationships: use plants that share an evolutionary story with the insect population upon which those plants depend – mostly native plants in our landscapes.

Dr. Tallamy gave several examples of how important caterpillars are to bird species. During the period when hatchlings are in the nest, Carolina Chickadees bring between 390 and 570 caterpillars to their nest each day, depending on how many young are in the nest. And the young birds take between 16-18 days to fledge. After the young leave the nest the parent birds continue to feed them caterpillars. It can take between 6,000 to more than 10,000 caterpillars to successfully rear and fledge a brood of these birds – and that's just for one pair of chickadees.

"we have let the lawn-maintenance industry define what *beauty* consists of"

When viewing a typical suburban landscape, it seems we have let the lawn-maintenance industry define what "beauty" consists of: large expanses of turf grasses that are managed like golf courses – with heavy doses of chemicals to keep them green and weed free. He also mentioned that there are 230 species of birds in North America that are at risk of extinction according to the 2014 "State of the Birds" report. Much of that risk is due to habitat loss and fragmentation. But, that picture can be reversed if you and I adopt a more wildlife friendly way of designing and maintaining our yards and gardens.



One of his statements encapsulates his message: "plants should be considered more than decorations" in our yards. Drawing on this, he showed a truly hilarious image -- featuring multi-sized statues seemingly plunked at random in a large expanse of yard to illustrate his point. Alternately, if we begin to think about our yards as a blank palette upon which to build a multi-layered *Living Landscape* that provides the features which promote biodiversity. What we use in that *Living Landscape* should be able to answer "yes" to the following questions: 1 – Does it support life? 2 – Does it sequester carbon? 3 – Is it pollinator friendly? and 4 – Does it help us manage water better?

In addition to our individual yards and gardens, he pointed out that there are nearly 4 million miles of public right-of-ways in the United States and that this land provides a good opportunity for better management and use of wildlife-friendly plantings.

Dr. Tallamy also made many recommendations including:

- use grass only where you need to walk;
- be willing to share your yard with wildlife;
- feel free to have a "less than perfect" landscape;
- embrace the biome in which you live;
- and begin to transition from alien plants to native plants to start the "Restoring Nature at Home" process.

One statistic was particularly impressive: **if you total all the lawns in America, they are larger than all of our National Parks combined.** So, the importance of putting his recommendations into practice is enormously important if you value the benefits of living in a landscape that is bio diverse.

Monarch Watch would like to thank Grassland Heritage Foundation for their generous sponsorship of the Douglas Tallamy Lecture on March 21st. Thanks to GHF's support, Monarch Watch was able to reserve Woodruff auditorium, a state-of-the-art venue at the Kansas Union. The event was well attended by over 160 native plant enthusiasts. Angie Babbitt, Communications Coordinator, Monarch Watch, angiebabbitt@ku.edu




Monarch Watch Spring Open House

Saturday, 9 May 2015 – 8:00am to 2:00pm
West campus of Kansas University

Children can play games and make "seed balls" containing seeds of milkweeds and other butterfly plants that can be used to create habits for monarchs and other butterflies. Watch the queen bee lay eggs in our honeybee observation hive, see scary insects and spiders, or watch videos. All are welcome to tour the garden and lab space. There will be live videoconferencing demonstrations, and, of course, monarch butterflies! Plants will be available for a donation.

See www.monarchwatch.org.

Groundhogs

Our prairie maintenance group, the “Groundhogs” meet once a month, usually the 3rd Saturday, at our own Snyder Prairie near Mayetta, Kansas about 20 minutes north of Topeka. Work may include digging thistles, cutting woody growth, targeting of invasive plants, collecting seeds, cutting trees, or whatever else may need to be done.

In March the Groundhogs burned some areas of the prairie. Thanks to John Flavin, Myron Leinwetter, Bruce Yonke, Brian Roh, Ted Abel, and Dale Nimz for help on the burn. Photos by Frank Norman

Researcher Kathy Roccaforte will continue her sampling of pollinators at Snyder and other prairies. We look forward to seeing the findings of her 3 years of work.

We always need more volunteers! Be sure to contact Frank if you can do anything to help. Frank is planning one more burn on April 18 at 9:00am. Please let him know if you are able to help and receive instructions. Always wear all natural fibers, sturdy boots, long pants & long-sleeved shirt, hat, bandanna, and leather gloves for burns. Other upcoming work days are May 16, June 20, July 18, and August 15.

Prairie Appreciation Day will be in September and everyone can get a chance to see the results of all the work the Groundhogs do.

Contact **Frank Norman** at 785-691-9748 or fjnoman@sunflower.com to get on the volunteer list and be informed of work day activities. ***Please don't show up without contacting us, as we may need to cancel on a given workday.*** Always dress for the prairie with long pants, gloves, a hat, and sturdy shoes or boots, and bring along water.



Fire line started next to mowed fire break



Checking the fire is out before proceeding



Making sure fire doesn't spread to areas we don't intend to

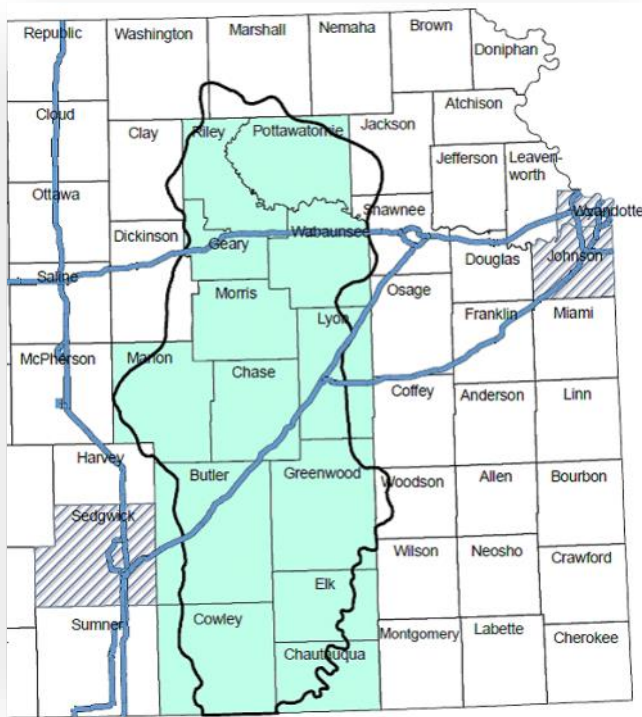
Prairie Burns

by Sue Holcomb

Burning prairie is a regular spring occurrence in Kansas. GHF board members suggested that it might make a good news-letter topic, but exactly how to approach it was not generally agreed upon. In searching out information that might be new to our readers, I came across varying opinions, as I knew I would.

Solutions through Education

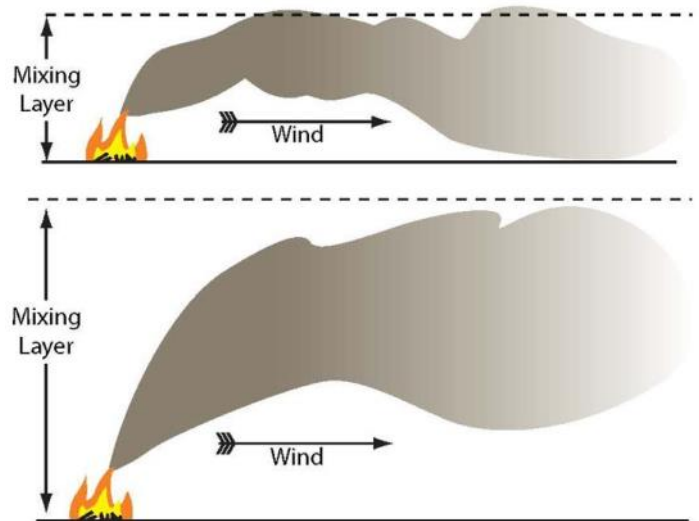
Following years where grassland burns negatively affected the air quality in Kansas City and Wichita, state agencies realized the need to develop more strategies for dealing with the conflict between ranchers' desire to use fire as a tool to jump start growth, increase their grass, their cattle's weights and their profits, with downwind communities' desire for clean air and better health conditions. In December 2010, the State of Kansas Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan was released. It lays out the issues and offers voluntary solutions through education. It allows agricultural burning in the Flint Hills but restricts all other burning during April. The full report can be found at www.ksfire.org and is an interesting read all about prairie and fire.



From the Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan-counties that are of concern because of widespread burning in April.

That ksfire web site has been developed to be educational for land owners, offering instructions on how to decide whether it's a good day to burn. The site offers a smoke modeling tool to demonstrate what effect smoke from a burn will have on other areas in the state on a particular day.

The graphics that follow show the necessity of choosing the correct weather conditions to conduct a burn. Too shallow of a mixing layer will trap smoke and particles, inhibiting dispersion.



While this report does not restrict burning for prairie owners in the Flint Hills, it does attempt to address concerns and to get landowners to think out all their objectives and the consequences of their decisions.

Challenging Spring Burns

I also came across an article challenging the wisdom of planning all burns for the spring, Towne EG, Craine JM (2014) Ecological Consequences of Shifting the Timing of Burning Tallgrass Prairie. PLoS ONE 9(7): e103423. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0103423. The author concludes that burning could be moved to fall or earlier in the spring and not adversely affect growth of grasses. Earlier burning would be beneficial from the standpoint of smoke effects downwind, less disruption to indigenous animals, and greater tolerance of plants to mid-summer droughts.

A Platte River prairie manager, The Prairie Ecologist blogger, Chris Helzer, prairieecologist.com, writes about fires, "The timing of fire dramatically impacts the way prairie plant communities respond. Early spring, late spring, summer, and fall fires each have different effects on plants, and those effects are also influenced by soil moisture, the presence/absence of grazers, and many other factors. Prescribed fire can also have serious impacts on some animals, even during the dormant season. Many invertebrates, for example, overwinter in the above-ground plant stems or thatch, making them very vulnerable to fire. It's important not to burn an entire prairie at once – especially if that prairie is isolated from other grasslands." In other blogs, he discussed the differences in where a prairie is located on the east/west or north/south spectrum. Temperatures and rainfall will affect the outcome of burns.

Managers of any prairie must be sure to carefully observe their property, plan their management strategies to achieve the goals they wish to attain, continually monitor the effects of their actions, and adjust as needed. Prairies are an ecosystem that is not a climax community. They change over time and our actions will affect how they change. Fire is one of the tools that we need to work with prairies, a tool that needs to be used with thoughtful consideration.

We depend on your contributions!

Please help GHF complete its mission by sending your donation today. The date of your last contribution is printed above your name on the mailing label.

Send to Grassland Heritage Foundation, PO Box 394, Shawnee Mission, KS 66201.

Membership Categories:

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Your contribution will be placed in the general fund unless you designate your donation for :

☐ Rachel Snyder Memorial Scholarship Fund

☐ Prairie Acquisition

☐ Education programs

☐ Prairie Management

Thank you to:

Daniel Lassman - for volunteering at the GHF booth at the Kaw Valley Seed Fair

Joyce Wolf - for assisting with the planning for the "Go Native: From Plain to Prairie" workshop series

Craig Freeman, Tim Miller, Brad Rueschhoff, and Randy Winchester for presenting during the "Go Native: From Plain to Prairie" workshop series.

Sue and Steve Holcomb - for assisting with the planning for the 3rd Annual GHF Native Plant Sale

Kevin Bachkora for accounting services

Craig Freeman for hosting meetings

We'd like to thank our large donors:

Robert Barnhardt *for Prairie Acquisition*

Ronald Sisk

Martha Wagner *in memory of Larry Wagner and in honor of David Wagner*

Gary Tegtmeier

David Wagner *in memory of Larry Wagner*

Kenneth & Gayle Nicolay *who are making monthly donations*

Myron Leinwetter

Deborah Borek *in honor of Gary Tegtmeier*

Special Donations since the last news:

Returning members: Kelly Kindscher, Carol & Dave Kyner, Stan & Janet Roth, Mary Kowalski, Carol Hunter, A. J. Loscalzo, Mike & Julie Campbell, Kirk Vaughan, Andrea Repinsky, and Richard Brune

New Members: Michael Morley, Catherine Reed, & Sandy Sanders.

For Education: Mary Cottom, Grace Beam, Artie Shaw *in memory of Forrest Small*

For Rachel Snyder Scholarship: Toni & Chip Taylor

For Prairie Acquisition: Robert Barnhardt, Rex Powell, and Marie-Alice L'Heureux

And thank you to everyone else who renewed!



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Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds

Michael John Haddock, Craig C. Freeman, and Janet E. Bare

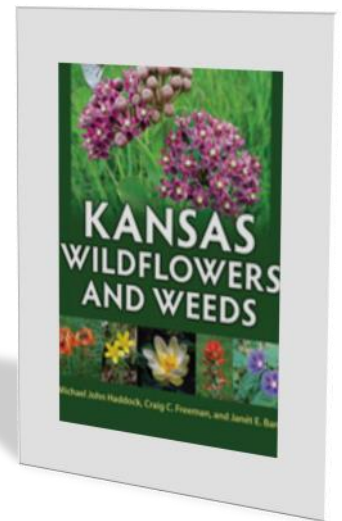
In the 35 years since the publication of Janet E. Bare's popular *Wildflowers and Weeds of Kansas*, our understanding of flowering plants has undergone dramatic changes. This transformation is reflected in the pages of the new edition of *Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds*.

A reference and a guidebook for a new generation of plant enthusiasts, this volume includes up-to-date nomenclature, keys, and descriptions, as well as habitat, distribution, and ecological information. In addition to herbaceous plants, the book profiles several woody species generally perceived to be either "showy wildflowers" or "weedy"-species.

Designed for the professional botanist and passionate amateur alike, *Kansas Wildflowers and Weeds* brings names and taxonomic information into line with recent revolutions in studies of DNA, macro- and micromorphology, cytology, ecology, and phenology. It expands upon Bare's earlier book's 831 entries with descriptions of 1,163 species—representing about 56 percent of the native and naturalized species currently known in Kansas—as well as 742 color photographs. For purposes of identification, conservation, study, or the simple pleasure of thumbing through, it is a resource without parallel.

MICHAEL JOHN HADDOCK is Assistant Dean, Research, Education, and Engagement Division, K-State Libraries, Kansas State University. **CRAIG C. FREEMAN** is Senior Curator, R. L. McGregor Herbarium, Kansas University. **JANET E. BARE** is the author of the original *Wildflowers and Weeds of Kansas*. March 2015, 520 pages, 742 color photographs. \$39.95

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