

## IWPF Grant #04-026W

# Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie Floristic Inventory

### Introduction

Prior to the growing season of 2003, a thorough inventory of Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie had not been performed. A species list existed, but it was compiled by IDNR biologists from a two short visits and by a local amateur botanist. Many plants were absent from the original list, certain plants were only identified to genus, and some were most likely mis-identified. Several new species have been added since the first time a survey had been completed.

### Materials & Methods

A visual "meander" survey was conducted monthly from May-October of 2003 by Ricky Garza to determine a list of species present at **Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie**. Species were identified on-site, with the exception of two sedges. These unfortunately were unintentionally destroyed. The nomenclature of species follows that of *Swink and Wilhelm's* "Plants of The Chicago Region" 1994 edition.

### Results

Species that were included on the original plant list for the site that were likely mis-identified include: short green milkweed (*Asclepias viridiflora*), and creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), and daisy fleabane (*Erigeron strigosus*). The original list included *Rubus occidentalis*, which was confirmed to actually be *Rubus allegheniensis*. Over 25 new species were documented on site, bringing the total number to 112. No endangered or threatened species were found on any of the visits.

### Discussion

The prairie has been rated a grade "C" prairie. The site had received a prescribed burn in the spring of 2003. Since the inventory was not conducted until May, and with the added equation of the burn, some early species may have been missed. If any additional information comes to light with additional visits, these shall be forwarded to The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

### Summary

The increased species richness as a result of the inventory is probably due to conducting an intensive survey on the site, and also a result of increased management, allowing for less obvious species to gain foothold. While there were no listed species observed, the prairie still exhibits amazing diversity for such a small site (approximately one acre). The combined species list from Garza's and IDNR's inventories is attached.

**Species List for Voight Pauper  
Cemetery Prairie LWR as of 2003\***

Acalpha rhomboidea	Three-Seeded Mercury
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
Agrostis alba	Redtop
Ambrosia atermisiifolia	Common Ragweed
Ambrosia trifida	Giant Ragweed
Amorpha canescens	Leadplant
Andropogon gerardii	Big Bluestem
Andropogon scoparius	Little Bluestem
Antennaria neglecta	Cat's Foot
Apocynum androsaemifolium	Spreading Dogbane
Asclepias sullivantii	Prairie Milkweed
Asclepias syriaca	Common Milkweed
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Weed
Asclepias verticillata	Whorled Milkweed
Asclepias viridiflora	Short Green Milkweed ?
<i>Asparagus officinalis</i>	<i>Asparagus</i>
Aster ericoides	Heath Aster
Aster pilosis	Hairy Aster
<i>Bromus inermis</i>	<i>Smooth Brome Grass</i>
Carex meadii	Mead's Stiff Sedge
Carex molesta	Field Oval Sedge
Carex spp.	Two Unknown Sedges
Cassia fasciculata	Partridge Pea
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	<i>Chickory</i>
Cirsium discolor	Pasture Thistle
Commantra umbellata	Bastard Toadflax
Convolvulus sepium	Hedge Bindweed
Coreopsis palmata	Prairie Coreopsis
Cratageus mollis	Downy Hawthorn
Cyperus esculentus	Field Nut Sedge
<i>Daucus carota</i>	<i>Wild Carrot</i>
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	<i>Orchard Grass</i>
Echinacea pallida	Purple Coneflower
Eleocharis sp.	Spike Rush sp.
Elymus canadensis	Canada Wild Rye
Erigeron annuus	Annual Fleabane
Erigeron strigosus	Daisy Fleabane ?
Eryngium yuccifolium	Rattlesnake Master
Eupatorium altissimum	Tall Boneset
Euphorbia corollata	Flowering Spurge

<i>Euphorbia cyparissias</i>	<i>Cemetery Spurge</i>
<i>Euphorbia supina</i>	Spotted Creeping Spurge
<i>Euphorbia dentata</i>	<i>Toothed Spurge</i>
<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild Strawberry
<i>Gauara biennis pitcheri</i>	Common Gauara
<i>Gentiana puberula</i>	Prairie Gentian
<i>Helianthus grosseserratus</i>	Sawtooth Sunflower
<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	Downy Sunflower
<i>Helianthus rigidus</i>	Prairie Sunflower
<i>Hibiscus trionum</i>	<i>Flower-Of-An-Hour</i>
<i>Hypoxis hirsuta</i>	Yellow Stargrass
<i>Juncus sp.</i>	Rush sp.
<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>	Round-Headed Bush Clover
<i>Lithospermum canescens</i>	Hoary Puccoon
<i>Lysimachia lanceolata</i>	Lance-Leaved Loosestrife
<i>Maclura pomifera</i>	<i>Osage Orange</i>
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medic
<i>Medicago sativa</i>	<i>Alfalfa</i>
<i>Melilotus alba</i>	<i>White Sweet Clover</i>
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	<i>Yellow Sweet Clover</i>
<i>Mirabilis nyctaginea</i>	<i>Wild Four O'Clock</i>
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	Wild Bergamot
<i>Morus alba</i>	<i>White Mulberry</i>
<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	Common Evening Primrose
<i>Panicum capillare</i>	Old Witch Grass
<i>Panicum leibergii</i>	Prairie Panic Grass
<i>Panicum oligosanthos scribnerianum</i>	Panic Grass
<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switch Grass
<i>Parthenium integrifolium</i>	Wild Quinine
<i>Parthenocissus inserta</i>	Thicket Creeper
<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	<i>Wild Parsnip</i>
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	<i>Reed Canary Grass</i>
<i>Phleum pratense</i>	<i>Timothy</i>
<i>Physalis heterophylla</i>	Clammy Ground Cherry
<i>Physalis virginiana</i>	Lance-Leaved Ground Cherry
<i>Plantago major</i>	<i>Common Plantain</i> ?
<i>Plantago rugelii</i>	<i>Red-Stalked Plantain</i>
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	<i>Kentucky Blue Grass</i>
<i>Polygala sanguinea</i>	Field Milkwort
<i>Polygonum pensylvanicum</i>	Pinkweed
<i>Potentilla recta</i>	<i>Upright Cinquefoil</i>
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	<i>Creeping Cinquefoil</i> ?
<i>Potentilla simplex</i>	Common Cinquefoil

Prunella vulgaris	Self Heal
Pycnanthemum virginianum	Common Mountain Mint
Ratibida pinnata	Yellow Coneflower
Rosa blanda	Pasture Rose
Rosa carolina	Pasture Rose
Rubus allegheniensis	Common Raspberry
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	<i>Curly Dock</i>
Scirpus sp.	Bulrush sp.
Scutellaria sp.	Skullcap sp. ?
Silphium laciniatum	Compass Plant
Sisyrinchium albidum	Blue-Eyed Grass
Solanum americanum	Black Nightshade
<i>Solanum carolinense</i>	<i>Horse Nettle ?</i>
Solidago altissima	Tall Goldenrod
Solidago canadensis	Canada Goldenrod ?
Solidago graminifolia	Common Grass-Leaved Goldenrod?
Solidago gymnospermoides	Vicid Grass-Leaved Goldenrod
Solidago juncea	Early Goldenrod
Solidago missouriensis fasciculata	Missouri Goldenrod
Solidago rigida	Stiff Goldenrod
Solidago speciosa	Showy Goldenrod
Sorghastrum nutans	Indian Grass
<i>Sporobolus aspera</i>	<i>Rough Dropseed</i>
Sporobolus heterolepis	Prairie Dropseed
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	<i>Common Dandelion</i>
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	<i>Red Clover</i>
Viola pedatifida	Prairie Violet
Viola sororia	Common Blue Violet
Vitis riparia	Riverbank Grape
<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>	<i>Cocklebur</i>

\* Species list compiled from Ricky Garza (IWPF Grant 2003), Shannon Horn, Kim Roman, and Mr. Morrison (amateur local botanist), 1997-2002.

Plants identified to Genus only were not verified by Garza.

*Italicized* = Non-native

? = Unconfirmed/possible misidentification. Not verified by Garza.

## Press Release

Contributions to the Department of Natural Resources' Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund has made possible a plant survey of the Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie, located 4 miles east of Streator. This one-acre cemetery prairie is owned by Otter Creek Township, and was formally protected as a Land and Water Reserve in 1997. The registry of Illinois Land and Water Reserves is a conservation program jointly administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. Properties that are enrolled in the program are legally protected from disturbance in perpetuity.

Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie is a significant natural area because it is one of the few black soil prairies left in LaSalle County. It, like many other pioneer cemeteries, has retained much of its original vegetation because it was never converted to agriculture. This site represents what most of north-central Illinois looked like when European settlers arrived— a sea of tall grasses mixed with a variety of color throughout the growing season.

This site is being managed to maintain its pre-settlement vegetation and high quality character. Non-native plants like sweet clover and Hungarian brome are being hand-pulled and herbicided because they can out-compete the native prairie plants. In addition, the prairie is burned periodically to help control woody species and non-native weeds, and to also promote the growth of prairie plants, as many are dependent on fire.

With the recent management activities, the prairie is gradually increasing in quality. Fewer exotics (non-native plants) dominate the site, and new species have been observed. The Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund project has brought the number of documented plants to 80 native species. This number is expected to increase with management and time.

For additional information on Voight Pauper Cemetery Prairie or state conservation programs, contact Kim Roman of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission at (847) 608-3100, ext. 2038.