

September 2021

Issue #3

THE NEBRASKA NATURALIST



July 2021 Training Class, Cedar Point Biological Station. Photo: Bill Clemente

Welcome!

Matt Jones, State Program Coordinator

Greetings Nebraska Master Naturalists and partners! What great summer we at the Nebraska Master Naturalist program were afforded to have. The program was able to host two trainings, and for me it was an inspiring and energizing opportunity to be back in person, learning hands on with new and fellow naturalists and seeing connections and relationships being built. This fall I am looking forward to one more core training as well as further development of the Jr. Naturalist Program. There are many volunteer opportunities and continuing education opportunities that await you this fall, I encourage all of you to take a look at the online events calendar to explore this opportunities to, Explore, Contribute, and Connect!

2021 Volunteering Snapshot

So far in 2021 Nebraska Master Naturalists volunteered a total of 2,500 hours. Connected with 8,883 people and impacted 16,797 acres through natural resource management projects. The total volunteering effort provided the state in \$110,684 in salary savings by using volunteers.



IN THIS ISSUE

- *Welcome & Program Update*
- *Eastern Butterfly Guide*
- *Neihardt Volunteer Award*
- *Ferraro Award*
- *Nebraska Master Naturalist Program History 2014-2016, Tim Olin*

Eastern Nebraska Common Butterfly Guide

Donate to the Nebraska Master Naturalist Foundation to receive a copy

We are excited to announce that the Nebraska Master Naturalist Foundation has partnered with Master Naturalists Joanne Langabee and Holly Hofreiter in the production of an Eastern Nebraska Guide to Common Butterflies.

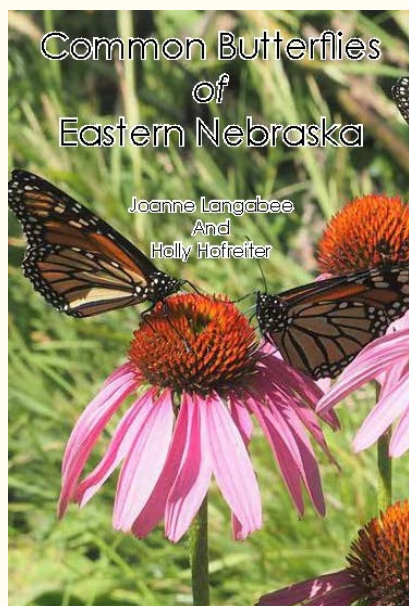
The region is divided into North, Central and South. The guide includes the most common butterflies in Eastern Nebraska. The butterflies are grouped by Family. The pictures show different characteristics of each butterfly. Included in the description of the butterfly is: Common Name, Scientific Name, Wing Span, Sighting Range, Host Plant, Nectar Plant, Winter Over and then information about how common the butterfly is, where it can be found, and general information about it. The pictures were taken by Joanne Langabee, Loren and Babs Padelford.

Joanne Langabee has been doing butterfly field research at Lourtizen Gardens and Fontenelle Forest since 2015. The Sighting Range used was based on her research. Joanne is a Nebraska Master Naturalist and retired science teacher. Holly Hofreiter has been doing the butterfly field research with Joanne since 2015. Holly is a Nebraska Master Naturalist, retired Science teacher and naturalist.

The guide will be available for a minimum donation of \$15. Donations will be accepted through October 1st. You can donate [here](#) Shipping is included. If you would like more than one copy please mention it in the comment section of the donation page.

All proceeds go towards the mission of the Nebraska Master Naturalist foundation. We will be accepting donations now through October 1st. Then will send the guide for its first printing and shipping shortly after.

Thank you for your interest and your support of the Nebraska Master Naturalist Foundation!



Cabbage White – *Pieris rapae*

Wingspan: 2.25 – 3.8"
Sighting Range: Mid-April – Oct.
Host Plant: Cabbage, Broccoli, Aster
Nectar Plant: Aster, Cosmo, Catmint
Winter Over: Chrysalis/Immigrant

Notes: Widespread; Common. Only non-native butterfly. One of first butterflies in spring. Males have one black spot and females two. Underwing can be pale yellow to white. Veins may be distinct. Found near open areas, forests.

Checkered White – *Pontia protodice*

Wingspan: 2.25 – 3.8"
Sighting Range: Mid-May – Oct.
Host Plant: Partridge Pea, Cabbage
Nectar Plant: Alfalfa, Composite plants
Winter Over: Chrysalis/Immigrant

Notes: Widespread; Occasional. Females more dark spots than males. Not common but can be seen most years. Found near open areas.

Nebraska Master Naturalists in Action

Ned Stringham Accepts Marie Vogt Volunteer Appreciation Award From The John G. Neihardt Foundation

In the spring of 2021 Master Naturalist Ned Stringham approached the Nebraska Master Naturalist Program about a potential project with the John G. Neihardt Historical Center. The objective being to replace fragile hostas and a non-native tree with durable species which are regionally adapted and that will attract pollinators. As well as replace non-native plants with native ones, creating a pollinator garden, developing a rain garden, and planting a Native American sustainability garden. Ned applied for funds available through the program's out going Nebraska Master Naturalists in Action grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

Partnering with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, Bloom boxes consisting of native plant species were used to enhance the natural habitat on the Neihardt center grounds. In May, along with fellow Master Naturalist Belinda Greiner and Katherine Harper and other local volunteers the team planted the native species. Then in August the Neihardt Foundation awarded the Nebraska Master Nationalists with the Marie Vogt Volunteer Appreciation award for all of Ned and the others planning and assistance with this wonderful project. Congratulations to Ned and all those who participated!



FERRARO EARNS WILDLIFE SOCIETY'S EDUCATION AWARD

Since becoming a University of Nebraska–Lincoln faculty member in 1990, School of Natural Resources herpetologist and Professor of Practice Dennis Ferraro has advocated for the conservation of reptiles and amphibians.

His impact on conservation education for Husker students and Nebraskans alike has been enormous, said the school's director, John Carroll. This month, Ferraro's efforts to support conservation were recognized by The Wildlife Society. The international organization, which addresses issues that affect the current and future status of wildlife in North America and throughout the world, has named Ferraro its 2021 Conservation Education Award winner.

"We are very excited that Dennis received this prestigious national award for his educational efforts," Carroll said. "Dennis exemplifies a passion for his work and his students. There is no better advocate for reptiles and amphibians in the state of Nebraska."

The award honors people involved in long-term efforts that support conservation education. Carroll said that Ferraro, who often handles snakes while educating students and citizens about them, has dedicated his life to serving conservation education in Nebraska.

"He accomplishes this through his teaching and mentoring of students at UNL through a wide range of courses, including field courses at Cedar Point Biological Station and in Puerto Rico," Carroll said. "Dennis is especially engaged with mentoring our undergraduates in research and other creative activities, which contributes to herpetofauna conservation and biology and training of our students to be biologists. He has mentored numerous students through the Undergraduate Creative Activity and Research Experience and the Cabela's Apprenticeship programs."

Ferraro said teaching students has been a lifelong honor.

"I don't consider it a job; I consider it my life," he said. "While this is a great recognition, seeing the students I taught going forward and being successful is, to me, what makes teaching worthwhile."

In addition to mentoring Husker students, Ferraro has spent more than a decade stewarding the Nebraska Master Naturalist Program. The program has trained hundreds of volunteers to become Certified Master Naturalists who have participated in more than 6,000 projects across Nebraska designed to restore native habitats, prevent waterway degradation, improve waste management and support conservation of at-risk species. The program has received more than \$700,000 in grants in its 11-year history and recently received a [\$71,000 grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

"Dennis has dedicated his life to serving conservation education in Nebraska, and his impact here has been immeasurable," Carroll said.



Photo Credit: Bill Clemente



Photo Credit: Bill Clemente, Cedar Point Biological Station 2021

Nebraska Master Naturalist Program History

2014-2016 A timeline of the history of the Master Naturalist Program was organized and written by fellow Naturalist Tim Olin

2014

In 2014 the program received good news that the Nebraska Environmental Trust would continue to fund the program for another 3 years with \$300,000. It will allow the Program to hire 2 full-time and 1 part-time persons. Originally 2 people guided the Program from Hardin Hall on the UNL East Campus.

At that time there was only an Interim Coordinator. Other funding and support came from at least 31 other diverse entities such as the Calamus Outfitters, the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Nebraska Forest Service, Pioneers Nature Center and the Prairie Loft Agriculture Education Center.

Nebraska Master Naturalists Interim Program Coordinator and Trainings Assistant Matt Jones pointed out who Nebraska Master Naturalists are.

They include “landowners, teachers, professionals, guides, college students, parents, retirees, and role models.” Just to name a few.

“In today's world, it's clear that our natural environment cannot be preserved and protected by the few people officially designated with this task. It will take all of us, in all parts of the world. We all need to find ways to help in this monumental task. Citizen Science offers each of us a path to find special ways in which we can each help protect our part of the world. It's an elegant, efficient, and engaging solution to the huge environmental problems we face in the 21st century.

It is also becoming clear in this century that protected areas of the world - parks, preserves, reserves, refuges, etc. - can only be managed effectively by engaging all stakeholders in the stewardship process. We need to find ways to create collaborations between stakeholders: land management agencies, regional communities and governments, private landowners, cities and metro areas, tourism operators, tourists, recreationists, scouts, seniors, children, student organizations, and other visitor groups.”

The above was taken from the “Citizen Scientists” website and is in essence what the Nebraska Master Naturalist Program is all about.

The science and art of becoming informed stewards of the environmental world we live in. The Mission Statement of the Program is that it “educates a volunteer network dedicated to promoting the conservation of Nebraska’s natural resources.” Why does the environment need such people? Those who care about the environment have not had the good fortune to discover a money tree yet. An example of that fact was the temporary closing of nearly 30 state parks in 2013 by Nebraska Game and Parks. Most environmental programs cannot begin to reach their full potential without volunteers. They can be the beating heart of many programs and the Nebraska Master Naturalist Program is a wonderful way to provide trained volunteers.



Niobrara Valley Preserve 2014, Photo Karen Klein

Three key words for the Program are Explore, Contribute and Connect. Master Naturalists have the opportunity to explore along side not only their fellow Naturalists but along side people from Nebraska Game and Parks, the Natural Resource District, those college professors, and other experts in the environmental sciences. They connect with a wide range of like-interested people who have a passion for nature and they contribute by volunteering their time and knowledge to a wide range of organizations.

Annabel leaves as Coordinator and Matt Jones is the Interim from February to August 2014. Bruce Mellberg is hired as Coordinator from October 2014 to October 2016.



Niobrara Valley Preserve 2014

2015

The first Nebraska Master Naturalist calendar is published. Three thousand copies of the 2016 Naturalist Calendar was undertaken to be distributed to the conservation community & interested public.

The Endangered Salt Creek Tiger Beetle Reintroduction Project continued with larvae introduced at 11 transects at 5 monitoring site in Lincoln's saline wetlands.

Mike Schrad is the new Chair of the MN Executive Board.

The new Core 24 curriculum training is put into place. March 31st 9 new Master-Naturalists-in-Training had completed new Core 24 training course. The new members may choose more in-depth (Core+ or Tier 2) instruction toward full certification and to also begin volunteering earlier. Total number of hour to certify remains at 60 hours.

A renewed website actually works for reporting volunteer time and effort.

By the end of June, Wildcat Hills Nature Center Scottsbluff, Cedar Point Biological Station and The Nature Conservancy's Niobrara Valley Preserve trainings brought 24 more Master-Naturalists-in-Training to the ranks which number 264.

Dennis Ferraro steps down at year's end as Executive Board Chair, but continues as Principal Investigator and supervisor of the NET (Nebraska Environmental Trust) grant for the program and Coordinator.

2016

Partnerships emerged with volunteer or training opportunities with the Nebraska State Museum; Hyde Observatory; Heron Haven preserve; Platte river State Park; and Homestead National Monument.

In October 21 new members were added. They participated in the fall Core train class held at Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium in Schramm Park near Gretna.

Work on the calendar proceeded with NMN Paula Hoppe, Rebecca Osborn-Reagan and Kristal Stoner of Nebraska Game & Parks doing various tasks related to the production. The calendar was released in the fall.

NMN Karen Hamburger, Deb Miller and Deb Mowry shared "The Explorer's Guide To Central Nebraska Prairies with Boy and Girl Scout Groups, area grade school students and SOAR camp participants, as with the Crane Trust and Bader Memorial Park.

The Halsey Youth 4H camp at the Nebraska National Forest was a training site. The winter Gala Gathering was held at Mahoney State Park on January 23rd. As of October 1st Matt Jones accepted the position of Program Coordinator.

In November a news story featured the NMNP broadcasted statewide via Nebraska Telecommunications Radio (NET).



Training Classes 2014-2016



April 2014



May 2014



June 2014



February 2015



May 2015



June 2015

Training Classes 2014-2016



November 2015



May 2016



June 2016



October 2016

CONTACT US

Matt Jones, State Program Coordinator

mjones30@unl.edu

402-937-8601

www.nemasternaturalist.org



2021 Cedar Point Biological Station, Photo Bill Clemente

Please consider supporting the future of the Nebraska Master Naturalist Program by donating today. Your commitment will go a long way to protect conservation and education in Nebraska!

Leaving a gift in your will or trust, or another form of planned gift can make positive impact in our fulfilling our mission.

Find out more at www.nemasternaturalist.org.

The Nebraska Master Naturalist Foundation a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Our federal tax ID number is 81-1014784