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Nebraska Section Society for Range Management Newsletter



Message from the President by Jack Arterburn

Spring is in the air! You can make an argument for not liking any other season, however, I have yet to find someone who does not like spring. Calves are hitting the ground running and the tinge of green in the hills is building. I am thankful for the moisture we have gotten the past couple of weeks and hope we can continue the trend into the summer.

Thank you all for a successful annual meeting and thank you to the committee and council for their help making the two days a success. I hope you found the

presentations worthwhile and have taken advantage of the recordings if you were not able to attend live. I am hopeful and optimistic that we will have the opportunity to meet in person next year to catch up and put new names to faces.

I hope you have enjoyed the ease of the primarily open winter. Unfortunately, an open winter comes at a cost and this is evident in soil moisture models. With all the negativity in the world I would have liked to focus on something upbeat, but the reality

is we are facing the potential of drought. During drought, SRM is more important than ever to provide guidance on sound range management practices. With the recent precipitation it is easy to become complacent, however, subsoil moisture beyond 25cm is lacking in western Nebraska. Let's hope 2021 takes a turn for the better.

Stay well.

Jack

Historian's Report by Jeff Nichols

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE NEBRASKA SECTION.....

Five Years Ago (2016)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Karla Jenkins, President; Bob Broweleit, Past President; Jeff Nichols, President Elect; Angie Petersen, Secretary-Treasurer; Shelia Luoma, Newsletter Editor; Anthony Perlinski and Mitch Stephenson were Council members.

Ten Years Ago (2011)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Curtis Talbot, President; Michael Croxen, Past President; Jon Soper, President Elect; Leslie Stewart-Phelps transitioning to Angie Petersen, Secretary/

Treasurer; Kristin Miller, Newsletter Editor; Cindy Tusler and Bob Broweleit were Council Members.

The 48th annual Nebraska Range Youth Camp was held June 13th - 17th at the Nebraska 4-H Camp near Halsey, NE. There were 38 high school students from across Nebraska and one from eastern Colorado who attended this week-long educational activity. The overall top camper was Johnny Ference of Ord. The top first year camper was Reid Stagemeyer from Cambridge.

Jess Milby and Laura Snell, two UNL students, traveled to Windhoek, Namibia to assist UNL Professor, Walt Schacht with research and do mission work. Snell said of her trip; "It was an exhilarating experience that really opened up

my eyes to a different part of the world. It was wonderful to help others while conducting research and visiting a new place."

The first North American Invasive Plant Ecology and Management Short Course (NAIPSC) was held at North Platte, July 6th - 8th. There were 38 participants. Steve Young, former Weed Ecologist with the UNL, West Central Research and Extension Center organized and facilitated the course.

The State Range Judging Contest was held in the Sidney area on October 4th. The champion individual judge was Taylor Hornickel of Ord.

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Photo Focus Graciously Contributed by Nadine L. Bishop, NOWCC/Nebraska NRCS—ACES Range Management Support



“Yesterday, I made my first plant-hunting trip of the year to one of my favorite planting (if watching birds is birding - is finding plants planting?) spots - Ash Hollow State Historic Park. This is earlier than other native flowering plants are out, but this is when I've found pasqueflowers blooming in the past. It sure is nice to have extra days a week off to do this sort of thing .

Pasqueflower (*Anemone* (or *Pulsatilla*) *patens* var. *multifida*) is also known as Easter plant, prairie smoke, and prairie crocus and is a member of the buttercup (*Ranunculaceae*). It is one of the, if not the, first flowers to bloom in the spring, often just after snowmelt (sometimes it blooms in the snow).

In NE it is found primarily in the Northern Panhandle and along the Niobrara river; there are isolated populations farther east and south. It is found in open pine woodlands and dry rocky soils. Most of the plants in Ash Hollow SHP are near cedar trees in areas that are partially shaded, but there are some in full sun.

Pasqueflower is not preferred by livestock, but according to Grassland Plants of South Dakota and the Northern Great Plains, it is a preferred by deer which can eliminate the plant from an area. I've observed the Ash Hollow population tends to be a lighter blue-violet color to almost creamy color as compared to the Black Hills populations.”

Future newsletters will include a member's photo and a note from the photographer. Please submit your entries to embarne@nppd.com. Thanks and look forward to seeing your contributions!

Lisa Clarke McMillan Receives Nebraska Section Range Management Service Award from the Society for Range Management (SRM) Press Release by Laura Rubeck

Lisa Clarke McMillan, of Milburn, Nebraska, received the *Range Management Service Award* at the Nebraska Society for Range Management's (SRM) Annual Meeting, held virtually, November 5-6, 2020. The *Range Management Service Award* recognizes SRM members who have made outstanding contributions in service to the range industry or profession.

McMillan, a Soil Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Broken Bow, NE is recognized throughout Custer County, the Sandhills and greater Nebraska, for her passion in promoting a range-related management ethic for both current and future ranch owners and managers.

Through her position with NRCS and her personal ranch, McMillan combines over 30 years of experience providing sound range planning to producers across Nebraska. She has been a long-term member of the Society for Range Management, originally stemming from her service as a Range Club President in 1990 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has volunteered with numerous youth-based activities within the section, notably as

a Nebraska Youth Range Camp Crew Boss and Area IV Range Judging Contest assistant. Additionally, she has devoted much time as a mentor to the High School Youth Forum (HSYF), both within the SRM state section and nationally, as a HSYF subcommittee member from 2018 to present.

Her passion and service extend beyond SRM as she has led clubs and volunteered with 4-H and FFA throughout Custer county. Additionally, she has served as a coach, having organized local range-judging teams for youth without FFA programs or the ability to otherwise participate in statewide Range Judging activities.

As a strong advocate for Eastern red cedar management, McMillan has contributed greatly to the adoption and capacity for prescribed burning within our state. She is the charter member of Nebraska's Prescribed Burn Task Force and yearly organizes and participates in landowner prescribed burn training workshops. She provides technical assistance to six Custer county landowner prescribed burn groups and serves as a Nebraska NRCS Review Committee member for

prescribed burn planning and approval of Technical Service Providers (TSP). Additional volunteerism extends to both her church and the Mobile Food Pantry.

For her selfless service efforts in Nebraska, dedication, and hard work-ethic, Lisa Clarke McMillan is most deserving of this 2020 Nebraska Section Society for Range Management Service Award.



SRM 2020 Range Management Service Award recipient Lisa Clarke McMillan.

RUBECK RECOGNIZED AS OUTSTANDING YOUNG RANGE PROFESSIONAL Press

Release by Laura Rubeck

Laura Rubeck, of Aurora, Nebraska was recently awarded the 2020 *Outstanding Young Range Professional Award* at the Society for Range Management's (SRM) Nebraska State Section Meeting. This award recognizes contributions of younger range professionals in the advancement of the art and science of rangeland management.

Rubeck is currently a Soil Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) serving the Little Blue Natural Resources District. Rubeck recently earned a Grassland Management Certificate and M.S. in Agronomy with an emphasis in Range; researching the effects of management intensive cattle grazing on stream water quality.

Through her position with NRCS, Rubeck assists farmers and ranchers in conservation planning and provides guidance on natural resource concerns.

Rubeck is actively involved in the Nebraska Section Society for Range Management, serving as a council member, chair for the society's Information and Education committee, managing an annual fundraising contest for youth travel scholarships, and previously served as newsletter editor-in-chief. She also holds active memberships in the Nebraska chapter of The Wildlife Society, American Society of Agronomy, Crop and Soil Science Society of America, Soil Water Conservation Society, Nebraska Farm Bureau, and the Great Plains Chapter of Scientific Illustration. She also currently remains involved with the Food, Energy, and Water (FEW) Graduate Scholars Program.

With a focus on building her community, she volunteers locally growing organic produce for the Aurora Food Pantry within the Heartbeats Garden Club. During the growing season, she hosts educational hiking tours in restored Tallgrass Prairie along the Platte

River for area visitors interested in Great Plains ecology and history.

Rubeck attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and received her MS in Agronomy in 2019 and her BS in Natural Resources Management with minors in Ag Leadership Education and Communication, Forestry Fisheries and Wildlife, Grassland Ecology and Management, and Native American Studies in 2012.



Laura Rubeck received the 2020 NE Section, Society for Range Management Outstanding Young Range Professional Award



Letters of Thanks

Dear Nebraska SRM Section,

I wanted to thank you for your support in awarding me the *Outstanding Young Range Professional Award*, as well as electing me to serve on council. These opportunities were unexpected, and I am honored to belong to a section so encouraging of its members. This award is a wonderful motivational and self-disciplinary tool, as I enter council and step into the Information and Education committee chair previously held by Nadine Bishop. Her I&E chair retirement has left some exceptionally large shoes to fill; this award provides me the laces in moving forward.

Thank you again for your support, take care,

Laura Rubeck

Members,

I want to thank you for awarding me the Nebraska Section Range Management Service Award for the Nebraska Section SRM in 2020. I am very humbled to be nominated by my colleagues for this prestigious award. I appreciated all the kind words that were included in my nomination letter. I do enjoy teaching others about our rangeland resources and promoting activities/practices that help to improve them. My passion for prescribed burning, teaching range plant identification to youth, and judging rangeland management topics during speaking competitions, are among the services I enjoy most. I am truly honored and will proudly display my plaque in the NRCS office at Broken Bow. Thank you again for selecting me for this Rangeland Management Service Award for the Nebraska Section.

Lisa Clarke McMillan

Range Club Competes in Virtual SRM Conference by Jessica Windh, Doctoral Student and Recruitment Coordinator, Center for Grassland Studies as featured in March 2021 Center for Grassland Studies Newsletter

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Range Management Club spends the fall semester preparing for the Society for Range Management's annual conference. This year's Feb. 15-18 conference was held virtually due to COVID-19. Despite the unprecedented circumstances, the UNL students were able to compete in virtual versions of events and represented UNL very well.

Kaitlyn Dozler won first place in the Extemporaneous Speaking contest. She had 4 hours to prepare, record, and upload a 5-minute speech on prescribed fire. A team consisting of **Asha Scheideler**, **Nick Sanders**, **Lydia Regier**, **Kaitlyn Dozler**, **Brandon Jelinek**, and **Cole Liable** completed the Undergraduate Range Management Exam and finished a few points behind the fifth place team. The one-hour timed exam covered all topics with-

in the field of rangeland management. **Jordan Springer**, **Asha Scheideler**, **Collin Eaton**, and **Robert Witkowski** completed the Plant Identification contest, where students are given a limited amount of time to identify up to 100 mounted plant specimens. The students were supported by advisors/coaches **Cheryl Dunn**, Research Manager/Herbarium Curator in Agronomy and Horticulture, and **Jessica Windh**.

Asha Scheideler, Range Club president, was honored by the Nebraska Section of the Society for Range Management and awarded their annual scholarship. The scholarship is based on "...scholastic achievement, leadership, and participation in activities, especially those that are range-related."

The Center for Grassland Studies extends congratulations to all of these students for their achievements!



Asha Scheideler and Kaitlyn Dozler watched the Students Awards ceremony virtually from the UNL campus. Photo by J. Windh

Note from the Editor by Emma Barnett

Hi all, and thanks for reading! I wanted to include a quick note to give you an idea of what to expect for newsletters this year. Since I'm new to this position, I'm hoping you'll all bear with me as I figure out just how I can make it my own, while keeping it just as useful and enjoyable of a read as Laura made it over the years!

First a big thank you to all the contributors of the newsletter!

With that in mind, here is what you can expect from me... The plan is to continue to distribute four newsletters a year, one for each season. The upcoming issues will be in June, September, and December. In the meantime, you might see some changes to the layout and content. Don't hesitate to let me know if you

see something you like, or really don't! This newsletter is for you, and I am excited to see where a little trial and error takes it!

Here is what I need from you... Have a great idea for an article? Some fantastic range photography? Maybe an upcoming range educational event? A fun/clean comic that tickles your funny bone? A pressing rangeland question you'd like answered? If so, drop me a note—I'd love to include it in our next newsletter! Just email me at embarne@nppd.com.

Thanks again, and looking forward to seeing where all this goes!

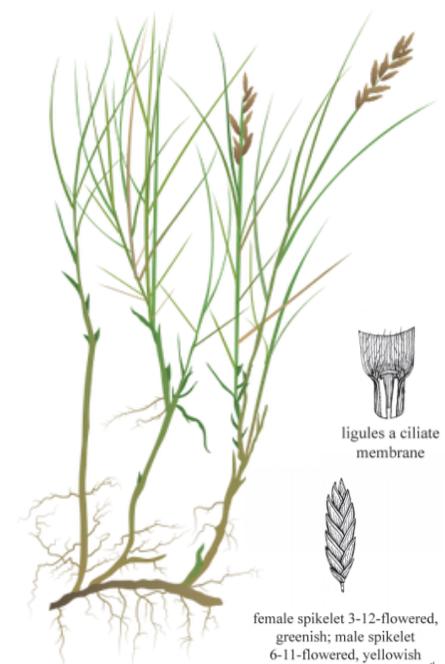
Warmest Spring Wishes,

Emma



Range Plant ID Pop Quiz

Can you identify the Nebraska range plant below? Bonus points for life span, origin, season, and growth form! Answers on page 5.



Historian's Report Continued...

The champion team was Dusty Staab, Cody Drudik, Johnny Ferrence and Taylor Hornickel, all from Ord. There were nearly 360 participants.

The annual NE-Section meeting followed on October 5th and 6th, also at Sidney. The theme for the meeting was "Understanding Past Management and What it Means Today". The Nebraska Section SRM Rangeland Award was presented to the Darby Creek Ranch of Sidney. The ranch is owned and operated by Norma, Tom, and Todd Johnson. The NE -Section Range Service Award was presented to Leslie Stewart-Phelps. She served as the Secretary-Treasurer for the section for many years and had recently retired to dedicate her efforts, along with her husband Bill, to their small operation south of Crawford, NE.

Two \$1000 Range Management Scholarships were presented by the NE-Section. The first was awarded to Caleb Miles of Thedford, who was a student at UNL. The second was presented to Samantha Evans of Cody, who was a student at CSC.

Twenty Years Ago (2001)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Walt Schacht, President; Lora O'Rourke, Past President; Teri Edeal, President Elect; Bob Sprentall, Secretary/Treasurer; Sherry Connot, Newsletter Editor; Scott Willet and Al Steuter were Council members.

The Nebraska Section annual meeting was held in Lincoln with the theme "New Tools for Managing Range and Pasture" Attendance was down at the meeting. Concerns about declining membership and participation were discussed.

The Section awards were presented to the following: Rangeland's Award, Richard Sabata of David City; Range Management Service Award, Robert M. Sprentall of Chadron; The NE Section College Scholarships were presented to Casey Redman of Burwell, and Kristin Nollette of Nenzel.

Two high school students presented papers at the Section meetings. Farris Williams of Scotia gave a presentation titled "A Pretty Purple Flower or Public Enemy Number One?" James Winchester from Gibbon gave a

presentation titled "The next Generation of Range Mangers". Both students represented the Nebraska Section for the High School Youth Forum at the international meetings in Kansas City, MO.

The State Range Judging Contest was held at Imperial where 214 participants representing 21 schools were in attendance. The top junior was Brady McCumber of Atkinson West Holt and the top senior was Nick Dunbar of Sargent. The top junior and senior teams were from Atkinson West Holt. Mike Davis of Chappell was the top professional and Greg Ford of Cody was the top adult.

Two Nebraska Schools participated in the 26th annual Old West Regional Range Judging Contest held October 7th at Rapid City, South Dakota. The Sargent senior team placed second and the West Holt senior team placed sixth.

A series of three workshops were held at Thedford, Arthur and Imperial October 30 - November 1 for area ranchers. There were 135 ranchers and other range professionals that gathered to learn about "Managing Livestock and Rangeland for Profitability". Speakers included: Dick Diven on "Low Cost Cow Calf Program"; Pat Reece on grazing strategies to maximize production; Don Adams on "Fitting the Cow to Natural Forage Systems" and Bill Oakes, livestock manager for the Kahua Ranch in Hawaii on grazing philosophy and monitoring

Thirty Years Ago (1991)

The Nebraska Section Officers were: Catherine Mills, President; Sheila Valasek (Luoma), President Elect; Cort Dewing, Past President; Daryl Cisney, Secretary Treasurer; Mary Schrader, Newsletter Editor; and James O'Rourke and John Gross were Council Members.

The Nebraska Section annual meeting was held in Kearney with a theme centered on water quality.

The Section awards were as follows: The Range Manager of the Year Award was presented to the Ravenscroft Families of the Valentine area. The Range Management Service Award was presented to Nadine Bishop of Imperial. The Nebraska Section college

scholarships went to Beth Pinckney of Firth, and Paige Wolken of Calloway.

A resolution was read and approved at the business meeting to oppose the proposed ban against federal employees being allowed to be actively involved in professional organizations on official time.

The state Range Judging Contest was held near Scottsbluff on October 2nd. There were 214 youth, thirteen professionals and two adults that participated. The top junior was PJ Wilber of Chappell and top senior was Kristin Huffman of Burwell. The top junior team was from Chappell and top senior team was from Burwell. The top professional was Mike Davis of Chappell and top adult was Jim Cantrell of Rushville.

Forty Years Ago (1981)

The Nebraska Section officers were: Jim Stubbendieck, President; Jim Emal, Past President; Mick Helberg, President Elect; Lowell Moser, Secretary- Treasurer; Steve Waller, Newsletter Editor; George Chavez and Irene Graves were Council members.

The Nebraska Section Meeting was held at Kearney on November 5th and 6th. There were over 100 people in attendance with 60 attending the awards banquet. The Rangeland's award was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Martin Viersen of North Platte. Harry Stokely of Valentine received the Range Management Service Award. The college scholarships were presented to Rachel Ondov of Lincoln and Lin Jeffres of Burwell.

The Nebraska range judging program was modernized through the use of the computer as part of the UNL AGNET SYSTEM. Twelve Nebraska NRD's contributed \$1,011 and UNL \$200 to underwrite the expense of developing the program and a supply of computer score cards. After two years of use at the state contests and selected area contests, the UNL Extension Service dropped the range judging program and the computer program was discontinued.