

Description: The La Crosse River Trail Prairie is situated in the Western Coulees and Ridges ecoregion of Wisconsin and features stretches of dry-mesic to dry prairie in a former railroad right-of-way. The long, linear remnants lie on a sandy terrace of the La Crosse River and are indicative of the once vast prairie and savanna complex that covered this portion of the state. The prairie flora is diverse with big and little blue-stem, Indian grass, and switch grass dominating. The drier Monroe County remnant includes species such as white wild indigo, cream wild indigo, white and purple prairie clover, lead-plum, prairie bush-clover, plains larkspur, pasque flower, prairie coreopsis, stiff cinquefoil, sky blue and silky aster, thimbleweed, and more. The La Crosse County segment is more mesic with a different assemblage of species including heath aster, compass plant, stiff and showy goldenrod, and New Jersey tea. A few wet pockets also exist with cat-tail, sedges, prairie cord grass, cup plant and Canada milk-vetch. Scattered along the right-of-way are young bur oak openings and small sand blows being stabilized by false heather.

The La Crosse River Trail Prairie is owned by the DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 1983.

Access: From the La Crosse River State Trail in Rockland, bike or hike the trail east or west. The segments can also be accessed by town and county road crossings.



La Crosse River State Trail's Rockland Prairie State Natural Area

Prairie Walk Schedule 2010

Tracking
seasonal
changes on
remnant
prairies
along the trail.



All hikes begin in
Rockland, WI at the trail crossing on
Commercial St.
(in La Crosse & Monroe Counties)

Always on a Sunday.....

Prairie Walks on La Crosse River State Trail's Rockland Prairie

With local naturalist/columnist
Bob Lee

Discover and learn about native
wildflowers & grasses on this abandoned
railroad prairie remnant.

2010 scheduled walks:

April 25, Sun.

Look for early bloomers such as Pasque
Flower, Dwarf Buttercup and Prairie
Smoke.

May 16, Sun.

Downy Phlox, Hoary Pucoon,
Columbine, Birdsfoot Violet, Lupines
and Great Solomon's Seal are likely to
be in bloom.

June 6, Sun.

Search for Hairy Pucoon, Golden
Alexanders, Spiderwort, Solomon's
Plume, Roses and Blue Flag Iris.

June 27, Sun.

See Prairie June Grass, Porcupine Grass,
Penstemons, Yarrow, Goat's Rue
Tall Meadow-rue, and Coreopsis.

July 11, Sun.

Turk's-cap Lily, Leadplant, Bergamot,
Prairie Clover,
Cup Plant, Culver's Root,
Gray-headed Coneflower and
Missouri Goldenrod.

August 1, Sun.

Species in bloom may include
Joe-pye weed, rough blazing Star,
Flowering Spurge,
Tall Sunflower, and
Naked Sunflower.

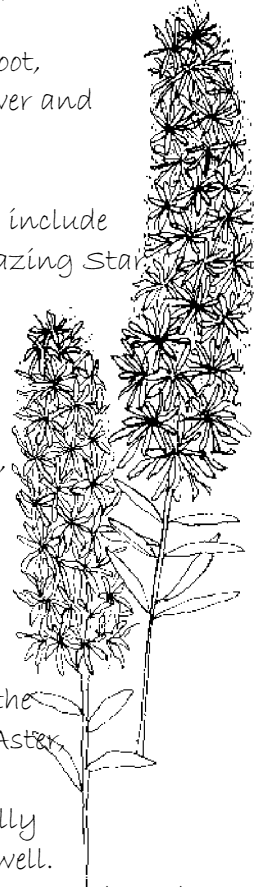
August 22, Sun.

See Prairie Sunflower,
Switchgrass,
Big Bluestem,
Cord Grass, and
Great Blue Lobelia.

September 12, Sun.

Asters will dominate the
scene. New England Aster,
Bottle Gentian and
Gray Goldenrod usually
bloom at this time as well.

October 3, Sun. Downy Gentian Little
Bluestem, and Sweet Everlasting, and
are among the plants you will see.



Meet at the trail crossing on Commercial
St. (CTH "J") in Rockland, WI
(eastern La Crosse Co.).

All walks begin at 1:30 p.m. These are
leisurely walks on level terrain. Wear
comfortable walking shoes and dress for
the weather. A hat to block the sun is
recommended. Please come and enjoy
the afternoon along the trail!

Questions? Call Wildcat Mountain
State Park Work Unit at
608.337.4775 or
Bob Lee 608.486.2154

Also....

On National Trails Day Saturday, June 5

Join Bob for a 10:00 a.m.

Walk on the trail near Sparta.

Meet at the Sparta Depot, 111 Milwaukee
St. in Sparta. Join us as we explore a
few remnants of the area's original
plant community. Refreshments
afterwards. For more information call
the Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce
at 800.354.2453.