

FIELD TRIPS IN CENTRAL BLUEGRASS. This is a regular monthly program for interested people to look at potential natural areas in the central Bluegrass region: especially Bourbon, Fayette, Woodford, Jessamine and adjacent counties. The idea is to keep educating ourselves with botanical information, entertaining ourselves with interesting sites, and doing some useful work. I will update notes as we go and provide feedback on important issues, especially as related to conservation (broadly defined to include restoration and related management). Ideally a network of regular participants will lead to more effective local conservation plans for this challenging region. We need a more solid basis for some aspects of stewardship at these sites. How to improve understanding of the original ecology? How to cooperate in protective activities? How to restore naturalistic processes? How to reduce aliens most effectively? Jessamine County is an initial focus, since I want to produce a booklet on natural history of this area. But it seems to me that a broader effort would be most useful—we can learn from comparisons across this region—county-based programs could develop broader partnerships.

In general, we go on the LAST SAT in each month. Please send any suggestions for dates and sites to visit. Future venues include: Jessamine Gorge, Marble Creek, Scotts Grove and others in Jessamine County. Other possible sites and tours to be arranged in next year or two in partnership with managers where appropriate: Warwick (Mercer Co), Buckley Hills (Woodford), Raven Run (Fayette), Palisades Preserves (Garrard), Shakertown (Mercer), Blue Licks (Nicholas), Shakertown (Mercer), Panther Rock (Anderson), Lower Elkhorn Creek (Franklin), Cane Ridge remnants (tour Harrison to Montgomery), Lower Howards Creek (Clark), deeper understanding of Cane Run (tour Fayette to Scott), search for old buffalo trail remnants (tour Scott and Franklin to Owen and Henry); ideally with repeated visits to ALL significant sites in the region over the years to come on a continual basis. Trips in boats along larger creeks and rivers can also be considered. Julian Campbell (campmeet@gmail.com).

I are particularly interested to interact with other people from Jessamine County who are interested in promoting good management of the Jessamine Creek Gorge area and its use for associated educational programs.

For example: how should old fields be managed?

- (1) Let them grow back to forest by themselves--with bush-honeysuckle OR
 - (2) Reforest but with management, planting selected trees (e.g. original white oaks) and reducing honeysuckle OR
 - (3) Pursue a good balance of native grassland, shrubland and woodland, using mowing, burning or browsing OR
 - (4) Convert some fields to "productive use" of native plants (nuts, fruits, wildflowers--including milkweeds, grass-seed, etc.) OR
 - (5) Continue to maintain the fields with annual cutting of hay (at least for a few years)
- Without intelligent discussion among people who know and care most about Jessamine Gorge, the best outcome will not be achieved. And there is an urgent need for citizens of Jessamine County to form a support-group for this site.

NOTE ALSO: NATIVE TREES FOR SALE, GROWN BY MYSELF:
http://bluegrasswoodland.com/uploads/PLANTS_FOR_SALE.pdf

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