

Mission

Our mission is to preserve and, through restoration, recreate a part of Iowa's vanishing natural heritage, providing a resource for the entire college, local schools, environmental groups, clubs, and the general public.



Lark sparrow in Perley Fall Burn Prairie
CERA May 2003 L. Mottl



Visit our website at:
<http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/biology/cera>

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Directions to CERA: Take I-80 west to Exit 173 (Sully/Kellogg). Go north (right) on Hwy 224 to first gravel road (S. 12th Ave. E). Go right (east) for ~1.5 miles to the main entrance of CERA.

CERA
Conard Environmental Research Area

CERA VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Volunteer workday April 2003
Woodland Restoration

Learn about Iowa's natural resources
Help restore prairie, savanna, and woodland
Educate others about our environment

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many ways you can volunteer your time and talents for research, restoration, and environmental education at CERA. Although many of these involve outside work, we have several projects like data entry that can be done on campus. You will usually need to have your own transportation to work on projects at CERA.

Seed Collecting



Field trips to CERA and other local natural areas are scheduled each year in October to hand-collect prairie seed.

The seed is used to increase the diversity of species in our prairie reconstructions and often for student research.

Seed collecting is a very relaxing and therapeutic activity that only requires the ability to identify a species or two in fruit.

Restoration

Restoration work most often involves controlling invasive species and clearing brush and woody debris from savanna and woodland habitats.



Volunteer workdays are typically scheduled in Feb-April. Gloves, equipment, and refreshments are provided. Volunteers are needed to provide transportation for others, help with the work, and take photos.

Biological Monitoring



Biological inventories and monitoring help us determine which species we have at CERA, their abundance, and how their presence and abundance may be changing in relation to how the land is managed. Thinning trees, prescribed burning, and invasive species control are a few management tools used regularly at CERA.

We are currently developing databases for major taxonomic groups such as fungi, plants, and invertebrates. The databases will be made available through the CERA website.

You can help us by collecting field data on a taxonomic group of interest to you and by assisting with data entry.



Prescribed Burning

Prescribed burns are implemented in late fall and early spring in prairie, savanna, and forest habitats. Volunteers interested in serving on a burn crew must attend a training session offered each year in October. Contact the CERA Manager to add your name to an email announcement list sent out prior



to prescribed burns. Visit the CERA website for an information sheet on ways you can help with prescribed burns.

Environmental Education



If you enjoy teaching others about our environment and Iowa's natural resources, you may find assisting or leading a field trip for a local school or community group a rewarding experience.

Consider designing guides and supporting materials for a particular age-group or type of field trip, or designing and leading one on your own or with a friend.

Photo Documentation

As with biological monitoring and data collection, photographic documentation is an extremely valuable tool for us to capture landscape changes through time and document interactions between people and the landscape.

If you enjoy photography, there are endless opportunities to practice your techniques, while contributing priceless images of the people, places, and things that make CERA such an exceptional resource for Grinnell College.

Contact the CERA Manager today to add your name to an email announcement list for volunteers!