

# Bluestem



Last week's thunderstorms were good for the fields at Bluestem where milkweed, coreopsis and cosmos are shooting stems up to the sky. The thunder and lightning were also symbolic of our mood as we woke to the devastating news of people and children murdered. We are brokenhearted. Our minds don't work very well. So we take time for silent reflection near the pond. We watch clouds move across the sky in the water. Then, we turn sad bodies towards the shovels and rakes, depositing our grief into the tasks we have in front of us.

We are so grateful for the gift of this land, the fields seeded with new life, the birdcalls from the woods, the natural sanctuary encircled by trees and a few boulders uncovered from under fallen leaves and vines. We imagine the bodies that once worked in these fields, cared for these trees, and loved and died on this land. We lean back into our work, scraping a rake across a pile of leaves, and discover a box turtle! It surprises and reminds us of presence. Sometimes, moving slow is all that we are being asked to do.

*Welcome to Bluestem Community*, where we are dedicated to nourishing community service, ecological stewardship and spiritual practice in shared fellowship. Join us Friday mornings with our [volunteer opportunities](#) or Tuesday afternoons in our [Bluestem Conversations](#).

---



*Late spring serenity by the pond.*

## BUILDING COMMUNITY

Bluestem's widening circle grows with every outreach into the community. Last month we had the privilege of reconnecting with old friends, as well as connecting with faith leaders, hospice programs, naturalists, and professionals in the death care industry. Their expertise in caring for families during times of crisis and sorrow is inspiring and essential to our planning for Bluestem's opening.

Many of you have asked how burial at Bluestem will work. These very conversations are helping us develop Bluestem's burial fees and protocols. A list of service providers for individuals and families needing support in fulfilling their end of life arrangements is in development. As we get closer to opening we will share this list and our procedures online, as well as by announcement in this newsletter.

Thank you for your letters and emails coming from places across the state. We are humbled by your support for Bluestem.

If you haven't yet, please **take a minute to complete [this form](#) so we can learn more about who you are, how you found Bluestem and if you are interested in burial at Bluestem.** If you ever wish to modify your newsletter preferences, simply click on the *Manage Preferences* link at the bottom of Bluestem emails.

Tell us more about *you*

---



*Asclepia field at Bluestem ready to welcome the monarch butterflies.*

## HAPPENING AT BLUESTEM

Summer is almost here and clearly set to arrive at Bluestem. After seeding the former cornfields in native grasses and wildflowers last March, they are suddenly popping with milkweed, tickseed and cosmos. The Little Bluegrass from which we take our inspiration is coming in like a whisper of green in the middle of the fields. Around the pond our volunteers have discovered wood sorrel, daisies and helmet skullcaps.

A key conservation strategy at Bluestem is recreating Southeast grassland habitat. By planting native grasses, these natural workhorses sink roots deep into the ground sometimes 4-5 feet, and weave a net that stores greenhouse gases and protects against erosion. Above ground, the birds, bees, and other insects are drawn into the prairie, creating a colorful and lively landscape for visiting family and friends, while pollinating neighboring farm fields.

---





*A winter sunset at Bluestem.*

## TOGETHER AT BLUESTEM

Every Tuesday from 4-5pm on Zoom we hold *Bluestem Conversations*.  
[Register online for the Zoom link.](#)

This month, 6/21, we're joined by spiritual activist, Lara Struckman, sharing *Radical Remembrance: The Practice of Holding Space for Eco-grief*. [Learn more here and register with us.](#)

Join our crew of loyal volunteers every Friday morning from 9-12 for clearing trails, moving rocks, scouting wildflowers and trimming up trees. We meet onsite in Cedar Grove. For the weekly reminder, sign up for our Trailbuilders Update below.

THANK YOU to our spectacular volunteers this month: *Carol, Deborah, Sidney, Laura, Tom, Dan, Steve, James, Jenny, Charlotte, Mel, Meredith, MR, Claire, Lee, Courtney, Meg, Kallyn, Ann, Anne, Robin, Heather, Shawna, Travis, Sara, Anna, Andy, Betsy, Cy, Joshua, Beth, Allen, Ben, Franzi, Carl and Walter!*

Get the **Trailbuilders Update**

---



*Bluestem's first wildflower in the fields with many more on their way.*

## BUILDING BLUESTEM

Welcome newcomers to this newsletter where we keep you up to date on our progress building Bluestem. Visitors to the land frequently exclaim, "wow, what a big project this is!" The answer to that is "yes, with room for everyone to participate". **We are looking to raise \$50,000 this summer for information kiosks, trail markers, and benches in the sanctuary. Can you help us with a gift so that we are ready to welcome families later this fall?** Click here to [learn more about donating to Bluestem.](#)

Make a gift to *Building Bluestem* today

Are you excited about introducing friends, family and colleagues to Bluestem? We are eager to meet them! We can do so with a Zoom presentation OR if you can organize a group of 6 or more, we can arrange a private tour onsite. [Contact us](#) for more info.

*Take good care of yourselves, your families and neighbors.* We hope to see you soon out at Bluestem!

Heidi & Jeff  
Co-founders  
Bluestem

