

## Sheldon Peck Homestead Native Garden in May 2025



Facing South toward House from Parkside Ave. Sidewalk



Facing North toward Parkside Ave. from within West Side of Garden

**Info and individual photos on what is in bloom can be provided in separate documents.**

Photos in this report were taken on May 13 and on May 26 at LGC Volunteer Workday with Heather Parris, Cindy Ward, and Lisa Mertz.





On May 26 we worked to further push back the colony of **Wandering Bellflower** (WB). The nearby areas we had cleared previously were still mostly free of WB, but it was spreading back in along the margins. The deep and oddly shaped roots of WB are very difficult to remove thoroughly. They are perennials and become embedded in the roots of desirable plants. To fully remove the WB, while retaining the good plants, we have to dig out large clumps of soil containing both. Over a large bucket for collecting soil, we carefully dislodge the bad roots from the good. The “keeper” plants are then placed in water until they can be replanted. The persistent source of WB in this area was deeply buried under a large prairie grass mound. This heavy, dense root mass had to be mechanically sawed and dug out in chunks. These were then sent “out to pasture” at off-site locations where they will have more room and full sun. There is more Wandering Bellflower to remove. Ideally we will get through the remaining thick patches this summer. The encouraging motivation to continue in this endeavor is how well the areas cleared in years past are persisting and how the new plants there are thriving. Some of the newly cleared area shown below will soon be planted with native Cream Violets.





Notice the shade that is cast on the front corner of the garden shown below. As old trees nearby grew bigger and new trees were planted, this area transitioned away from being a full-sun garden for **prairie plants**. This year we plan to add **savanna plants** to the area that is now part-sun/part-shade. In the western portion of the garden we've been adding **woodland plants** for some time. All living things change over time, and gardens are no exception.



Last year we removed quite a few taller plants that had seeded themselves into the area shown above. This year we can add plants that are more appropriate for smaller landscaped gardens. We should also place fine-textured **mulch** on the newly exposed soil areas between plants. In this context, we want mulch that is “plant-friendly” so that the desirable plants can grow and spread. - Pea gravel was placed on the path last year, but several more bags will be needed after a thorough weeding. When removing weeds from this path, care should be taken to minimize digging. Disturbed soil attracts weeds. Whenever possible, soil should be left below and the crushed limestone and pea gravel should be kept on top. Try probing and severing the roots below the surface and then pulling the weeds straight up without digging up the soil. More volunteer workdays will be scheduled soon.

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