



Field Notes

Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture E-Newsletter

E-Field Notes

June 2016

In this month's newsletter, we've gone a little wild.

In this month's president's note, David Redhage shares thoughts on his recent reading material: Eating on the Wild Side.

We present a recap, with links to resources, from our June 11 elderberry workshop. Host Brent Madding cruises the back roads of the state, seeking out wild-growing plants to incorporate into his commercial operation.

On the livestock side, one of the best ways to keep cattle from going wild is through the daily contact that's part and parcel of rotational grazing. Full information on the subject can be found in the recap of our June 4 livestock workshop.

Last but not least, one of the best-known wild-animal haunts in Oklahoma, the Tulsa Zoo, is helping to spread the word about our native pollinator publications.

As always, if you value our work, please also consider supporting it!

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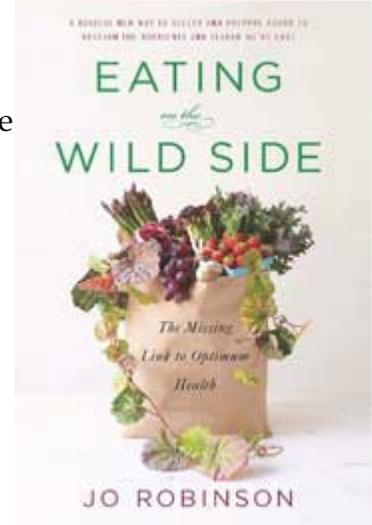
I read all the time. Recently I came across a book I thought might interest those concerned about food quality. The book is entitled *Eating on the Wild Side*, by Jo Robinson, published in 2013. While not new, it does contain some interesting information concerning the quality of the food we eat or should be eating.

The book is broken into two sections, vegetables and fruits. Each group of vegetables and fruits has its own chapter. You don't need to read the book from cover to cover. Each chapter stands by itself. I tend to like reference books structured that way; it allows me to grab it and read one chapter without feeling like I have missed anything.

The basic outline of each chapter points out how we should be selecting food based on nutrients and health benefits, not just taste. While this is not groundbreaking, the author spent a lot of time researching journal articles and publications focusing on the health benefits and nutrient and phytonutrient content of various vegetables and fruits.

The author examined how to select the best quality, how to store it and how to prepare it for maximum health benefit. This is a broad topic and sometimes I wanted more in-depth information, but you simply can't cover everything and keep the book a reasonable length. There are some surprises....

[Continue reading....](#)



Elderberry Workshop Recap



A capacity crowd filled the Kerr Center's June 11 elderberry workshop at 360 Farms.

Two of **Oklahoma's most successful elderberry entrepreneurs**, Brent and Valerie Madding, hosted the workshop at their own operation in southeastern Muskogee County.

The Maddings' presentation at [last year's elderberry workshop](#) at the Kerr Center was a crowd-pleaser - and generated enough questions about their place that this year they offered to bring the crowd to their own place.

The workshop introduced potential new growers to elderberries, and shared the details of 360 Farms' operations. Topics included **variety selection, propagation, establishment, production, harvest, marketing**, and the many uses for this perennial plant.

Kerr Center President David Redhage also made a presentation, and described the Kerr Center's own experience with elderberries.

The Kerr Center's website features a [recap of the workshop](#), complete with **electronic copies of the handouts and materials** distributed to participants.

Livestock Workshop Recap



The June 4 livestock workshop at the Kerr Ranch was a highly educational and informative event. For those unable to attend - or for those who did but would like a refresher - our website now features a [recap of the workshop](#), complete with **links to presentations and handouts**.

The workshop covered **management of both water and grass**, including such topics as:

- using [old tractor tires](#) as an **economical source of watering tanks**,
- [fencing cattle out of streams](#) and ponds to **improve water quality and limit erosion**,
- [estimating available forage](#) and planning grazing rotations,
- setting up **temporary electric fencing**, and more.

Tulsa Zoo Recommends Kerr Center Pollinator Resources



The [Tulsa Zoo](#) has added links to several Kerr Center pollinator publications to the "[What You Can Do?](#)" section of its website.

The website reads, "Monarch butterflies need our help. Milkweed, their only food source, is experiencing a rapid decline, which could cause them to go extinct. You can help monarch butterflies by planting milkweed in your own backyard. By doing this, you are creating a Monarch Waystation, which provides monarch butterflies with a specific habitat to assist and maintain their migration periods."

Check out the [Pollinator Guide](#), [Native Plant ID Guide](#) and [Milkweed Guide](#) from our friends at the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture."

The zoo's site also links back to the Kerr Center's own website, encouraging visitors to "...learn more about this important organization, and to find additional literature about sustainable agriculture."

July Events Around the Region: Butterflies, Cover Crops, and Agroforestry

JUL 12 Tue	Nature Conservancy Butterfly Count @ J. T. Nickel Family Nature and Wildlife Preserve (near Tahlequah)  Jul 12 @ 9:00 am – 3:00 pm 
	Tour the Kerr Center @ Kerr Center  Jul 12 @ 9:00 am
JUL 18 Mon	Southern Region Cover Crops Conference   Jul 18 – Jul 19 all-day
JUL 25 Mon	4th Annual Agroforestry Academy   Jul 25 – Jul 29 all-day
AUG 9 Tue	Tour the Kerr Center @ Kerr Center  Aug 9 @ 9:00 am

Butterfly count in the largest privately protected conservation area in the Ozarks? Cover crop conference in North Carolina? Agroforestry training in Missouri?

The Kerr Center's [online events calendar](#) provides full details on all of these workshops, along with others happening around the state and region. It also serves as a reminder for the dates of **monthly Kerr Center tours**, which run all year round, every second Tuesday by appointment.

Don't forget that you can also use our online calendar to **keep yourself and your friends up to date** on these and other upcoming events, including our tours:

- **Subscribe to our feed** and receive **updates to your personal calendar** (Outlook, Google+, etc.) as they are made.
- **Share events on the calendar** via a number of **different social media sites**, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.

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