

School of Environment and Natural Resources

A Summer At Douglas-Hart Nature Center.

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Douglas-Hart Nature Center located in Mattoon Illinois

"Through the responsible stewardship of Helen Douglas-Hart's gifts, the Douglas-Hart Foundation will be a leader in promoting the appreciation, enjoyment, and conservation of our natural resources by providing quality programs for all ages." Mission statement.

The nature center has three properties they manage. The main property is 70 acers of wet woods and prairie.



The north prairie before a storm rolls through. The prairie was full of native plants and some unwanted saplings that were starting to grow in. Those were removed and when it is burnt next should kill what was hidden.

Remember, people love pictures

The effect of the emerald ash bore on the green ash within the center was extensive. A large amount of time was spent felling dead trees close to the trails.



A dead green ash tree too close to the children's nature play area.



One of the trails that passed through the woods.

Most of the summer we worked on thinning out the woods of unwanted trees and shrubs. And helped gain canopy space for desired species of trees.



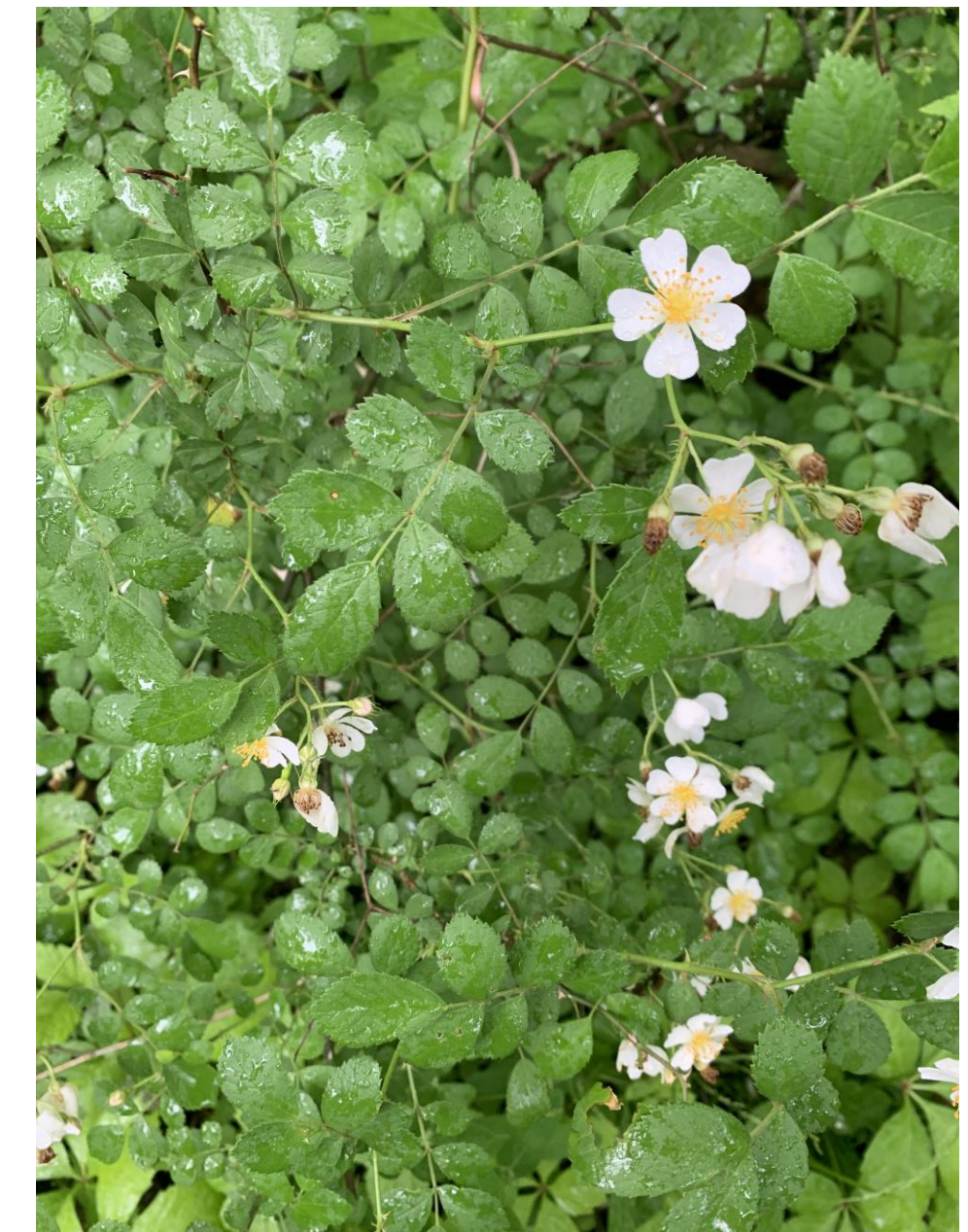
- Swamp White Oak before thinning rough leaf dog wood surrounding it and its canopy.



Swamp White Oak after thinning of surrounding trees.

The experience as a whole

This internship solidified that this degree path is exactly what I want. The dealing with nature and the outdoors. And having a sense of accomplishment in everything I was doing was fantastic. And dealing with invasive species and trying to create a healthy forest and prairie environment was an interesting experience.



An example of an invasive plant found within the nature center. Multiflora rose. We only found two bushes within the 70 acers and quickly removed them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my fellow interns and the head of stewardship and maintenance for letting me work alongside them all. It was an amazing summer of learning.



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