

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **September Science at the Illinois State Museum Features Prairie Restoration and the Reintroduction of Alligator Gar in Illinois**

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois State Museum’s monthly Paul Mickey Science Series program on Wed., Sept. 6 will focus on prairie restoration and biodiversity, while the Museum Research and Collections Center lunchtime Brown Bag program on Wed., Sept. 20 will look at the effort to reintroduce an ancient fish – the alligator gar – into Illinois waters.

**“Prairie Restoration and the Challenge of Maintaining Earth’s Biodiversity on a Changing Planet”** is the September Paul Mickey Science Series program on Wed., Sept. 6 at 7:00 p.m. at the Illinois State Museum in Springfield. Dr. Amy McEuen of the University of Illinois Springfield will discuss work at the Nature Conservancy’s Emiquon restoration involving tracking the floristic quality of the tallgrass prairie restorations through time, and testing whether certain plant species may be better candidates for restoration based on their geographic ranges. Dr. McEuen will also discuss the broader challenge of conserving biodiversity given global change. The program in the ISM auditorium is free and open to the public. The Illinois State Museum is located at 502 S. Spring St., Springfield.

**“Alligator Gar: An Overview of History, Research, and Prospects in Illinois”** is the topic of the Brown Bag Program on Wed., Sept. 20 at the ISM Research and Collections Center from 12 noon until 1:00 p.m. Nathan Grider of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will review the IDNR effort at reintroducing alligator gar, a “living fossil” and an important predator in freshwater ecosystems within their native range. After nearly 50 years of extirpation from our rivers, the IDNR has begun reintroducing this fish in coordination with other states. This presentation will review the history, myths, science, and objectives of the reintroduction project in Illinois. The program is free at the ISM Research and Collections Center, 1011 East Ash St., Springfield.

For additional information on these and other programs at the Illinois State Museum, please contact [events@illinoisstatemuseum.org](mailto:events@illinoisstatemuseum.org) or phone 217-558-6696.