



*Richard James visits the UW-Whitewater Nature Preserve and Rec Area five to six times per week. Because of his interest*

*and drive, the project of reconstructing the prairie is again under way. The project was first implemented 20 years ago.*

## Prairie reconstruction begins Saturday

A prairie-plant community is making its way back to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

There were over two and a half million acres of prairie in Wisconsin before it became a state, according to Professor Richard James. Since then, most of those acres were lost to farming and cropland. And now, he said, fewer than 2,000 acres remain, all in small, scattered parcels.

UW-Whitewater is reclaiming lost prairie by beginning a prairie reconstruction project at the UW-Whitewater Nature Preserve and Recreation Area. This Saturday, Oct. 9, volunteers are welcome to

help cut invading bushes and woody plants. Anyone with power saws is especially welcome.

The Nature Preserve is located at the corner of Fremont Road and Schwager Memorial Drive (formerly Stadium Drive). Volunteers will be working to clear the land from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. People should call James at (262) 472-4993 to volunteer. Once registered, people should park in the Wells Residence Hall north parking area, and sign up in the shelter house in the picnic area west on Schwager Drive, just off Fremont Street.

Those who cannot be there to help that day can show their support by donating funds which will only be

used toward the purchase of seed for the prairie land. Next spring two acres will be planted with prairie seed. Each acre costs approximately \$1,900 to seed. The goal over the next five years is to raise \$10,000 to purchase the seed.

To donate, people may call the UW-Whitewater Foundation at (262) 472-1105, or send a check to 800 West Main Street, Whitewater, WI 53190.

"Reconstructing a prairie-plant community isn't easy," stated James. "It requires time, hard work, money and perseverance. However, by pooling the community's resources, it can be managed and can be successful."