



Soil core samples are crucial for understanding soil properties and microbial communities.

The KU Field Station

The University of Kansas Field Station includes more than 3,400 acres of protected research lands, public trails and specialized facilities in northeastern Kansas. Located in the transition zone (ecotone) between the eastern deciduous forest and tallgrass prairie biomes, it offers opportunities for multi-disciplinary study. It also is one of 106 key sites in the National Science Foundation's National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON), established for monitoring environmental change.

At the Field Station, faculty, staff, students and visiting scientists conduct studies on such subjects as soil-landscape relationships; restoration and conservation ecology; animal, plant and community ecology; and aquatic ecology and watersheds. Students in the arts and humanities also use the Field Station as a base for academic projects. The Kansas Biological Survey, which manages the Field Station, offers workshops, summer courses, K-12 teacher training, and events for visitors of all ages. Public trails are open year-round.

More information and trail maps:
biosurvey.ku.edu/field-station



The Field Station's Rockefeller Experimental Tract serves as a key research site for long-term study of ecosystems, biodiversity and individual species.

Mission

The mission of the University of Kansas Field Station is to foster scholarly research, environmental education, and science-based stewardship of natural resources.

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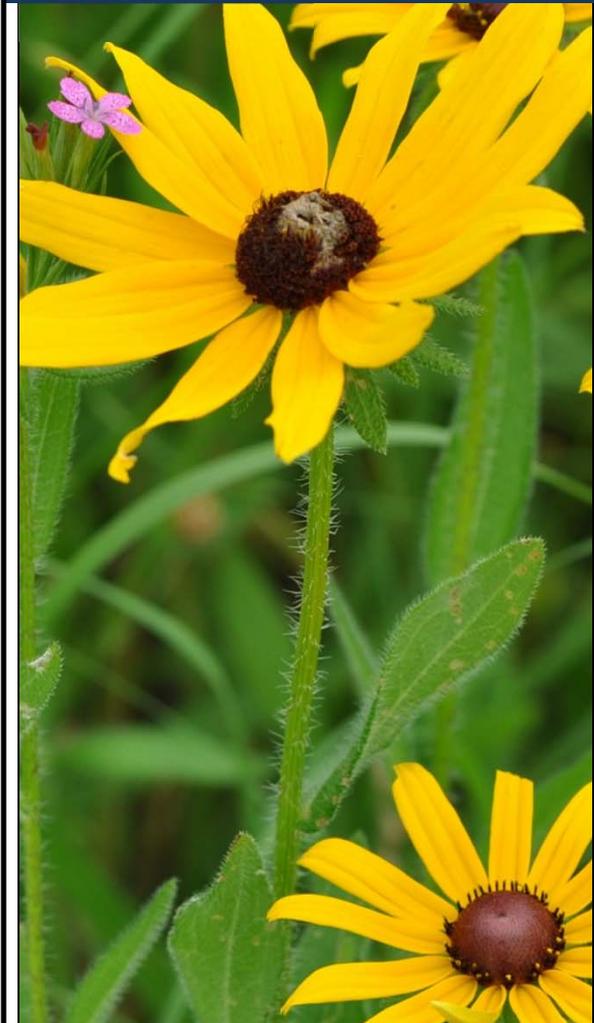
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The University of Kansas
Field Station



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Above: Survey scientists and affiliated KU faculty and staff conduct classes for KU students, K-12 science teachers and other groups at the Field Station's Armitage Education Center. Upper right: The Fitch Natural History Reservation, the first of the Field Station's tracts and the site of the world's longest-running herpetological study.



Left: Monarch butterfly on Sullivant's milkweed at the Anderson County Prairie Preserve. Above: Endangered Topeka shiners, a subject of long-term study by Survey scientists. (Photo: Joel Sartore)

Field Station core research area

The KU Field Station is made up of several distinct tracts in four areas in Douglas, Jefferson and Anderson counties in Kansas. The 1,800-acre core research area, just north of Lawrence, includes several tracts:

Fitch Natural History Reservation—Established in 1947 on land bequeathed to KU by Gov. Charles and Sara Robinson. Over the past 66 years, numerous studies here have explored succession, or how plant and animal communities change over time. The tract is named for Henry Fitch, KU herpetologist.

Rockefeller Experimental Tract—John D. Rockefeller Jr. provided funds in 1956 for KU to buy this 160-acre farm to preserve a small native prairie and test methods of prairie management. In 1957, KU began a long-term prairie experiment that continues to this day.

Cover photo: Rudbeckia hirta (black-eyed Susan) at the KU Field Station. All photos / Kansas Biological Survey except where noted.

John H. Nelson Environmental Study Area (1970)—This 618-acre area, named for a former dean of the KU graduate school, is home to the Kansas Biological Survey's research, field operations and maintenance office, as well as the Armitage Education Center. Its diverse habitats are used for a variety of experimental and ecological studies.

Suzanne Ecke McColl Nature Reserve (2007)—This tract protects core portions of the Field Station and is a focus area for public outreach and education.

Robinson Tract (1970)—Another portion of the Robinson farm, this 108-acre tract includes natural and restored wetlands and other habitats for study.

Native Medicinal Plant Research Garden (2010)—This five-acre site near the Lawrence airport draws hundreds of visitors annually and serves as a gateway to the Field Station's northern tracts.



The Kaw River Valley Overlook deck was the first of several Field Station projects undertaken by KU architecture classes.

Additional Field Station tracts

Anderson County Prairie Preserve—The Nature Conservancy acquired this 1,450-acre preserve near Garnett, Kansas, in 1996 and turned management over to the Kansas Biological Survey in 2006. The goal here is to maintain and enhance native biodiversity within an imperiled tallgrass prairie ecosystem.

Baldwin Woods (1960s and 1970s)—The KU Field Station preserves for study in perpetuity about 200 acres of the Baldwin Woods, a National Natural Landmark near Baldwin. The Breidenthal Biological Reserve, Rice Woodland and Wall Woods include eastern deciduous forest, high quality woodland and savanna.

Hall Nature Reserve (1999)—This 116-acre reserve west of Lawrence is used for studies of natural recovery processes associated with new approaches to land restoration.

To support the KU Field Station, give online at kuendowment.org and specify that your gift is for the Kansas Biological Survey, or contact:

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