

## **Konza Prairie Biological Station Stands with Black Scientists, Students, and Nature Lovers**

As a field research station and nature preserve, the Konza Prairie Biological Station strives to provide scientists, school-age children, community members, and tourists a place to experience and study a native tallgrass prairie ecosystem. We welcome scientists, students, and hikers from around the world, regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexuality, or country of origin. However, recent events have reminded us that while our station is open to all, some communities of color, especially Black scientists, students, and nature lovers, may not feel welcome or safe while experiencing this beautiful, complex ecosystem. As an organization representing scientists, teachers, and conservationists, we must do better.

We strongly condemn any form of racism or discrimination in the sciences and in all walks of life. We raise our voices in opposition to the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and so many other Black lives taken. We also realize that we must proactively increase our commitment and efforts to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all researchers, students, and community members. We were reminded of the precariousness facing Black people enjoying nature by a recent incident in New York's Central Park where a white woman threatened a Black birdwatcher, Christian Cooper, with a fraudulent police report. In support of Mr. Cooper and the many Black birders, we have joined the Black Birders Week campaign and welcome all Black birders at any time to enjoy the richly diverse avian fauna found on the prairie. Finally, we ask that anyone with any concerns or recommendations regarding safety at the Konza Prairie Biological station contact the director, John Blair. We are prepared to listen, learn, and act to ensure the safety of all scientists, students, and members of the public.

Many people come to our station every year for a variety of reasons, but every single person that visits the station is surrounded by a vibrant, living ecosystem that is healthy and resilient because of its diversity. We believe the same is true of people. We stand with communities of color, especially the Black community at this difficult time, and say that not only are you valued and welcomed as researchers, friends, colleagues, and visitors; we would be less without you.

### **The Konza Prairie Biological Station**

John Blair, Director, Konza Prairie Biological Station

Eva Horne, Assistant Director, Konza Prairie Biological Station

Brian Spooner, Director, Division of Biology, Kansas State University

Jill Haukos, Director, Konza Environmental Education Program

### **The Friends of the Konza Prairie**

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