and enjoyed the site, but he initiated and worked with
many other individuals to get the prairie restored
and preserved. The story of the prairie restoration,
preservation, and opening of the area to the public is
by itself a wonderful and inspiring tale.

Equally valuable to the basic chapters of this book
are Nolin’s multiple appendices and notes. Among
these are a description of the current Dayton Aviation
Heritage National Historic Park, fourteen pages of an
annotated list of the flora of Huffman Prairie, eight
pages of references, and an excellent index.

Anyone interested in the history of flight should
enjoy this book on Ohio’s role in those developments.
Anyone interested in the natural history of prairies
and restoration efforts will equally enjoy this book.
I found both stories fascinating and well researched.

Robert C. Glotzhober, Curator Emeritus of Natural
History, Ohio History Connection.
Email: rglotz@twc.com

The Prairie Peninsula. 2017. Gary Meszaros and
Guy L. Denny. Kent State University Press. Kent,

When most Ohioans think of tallgrass
prairie, they think of Kansas and
Nebraska—far west of Ohio. However, a
large portion of Ohio’s landscape was once covered
with prairie and a few small patches remain. These
outliers are elements of the Prairie Peninsula. This
book by Meszaros and Denny offers an excellent
written and visual introduction to these remnant
prairies.

Long after the last ice age, the midwestern
climate continued to warm between 6,000 and
4,000 years ago. The landscape
then experienced an extended
warm and dry spell known
as the Hypsithermal Interval,
or Xerothermic Period. The
drought allowed the western
tallgrass prairie to expand
eastward as the Prairie Peninsula.
The area later cooled, allowing
the eastern forests to expand
again, but leaving patches of prairie in portions of
Ohio, as well as Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin,
and Ontario. Some of these prairies still covered
a thousand acres or more in 1800. Ohio had perhaps
1,500 square miles of prairie at that time, but today
less than one percent of these prairies remain.

In five brief chapters, Meszaros
and Denny document the
many variations of prairie
ecosystems, the ecology of
their communities of flora
and fauna, and the amazing
biological diversity of prairies.

In this role, and previous roles
within the division, he spent
many years studying, managing,
and protecting prairie remnants
around Ohio. In addition to
visiting prairies throughout
the multi-state region, he also
established and maintains his
own personal prairie near his
home. The two authors have
brought together a valuable yet inexpensive book that
anyone interested in the natural landscape will enjoy.

Robert C. Glotzhober, Curator Emeritus of Natural
History, Ohio History Connection.
Email: rglotz@twc.com