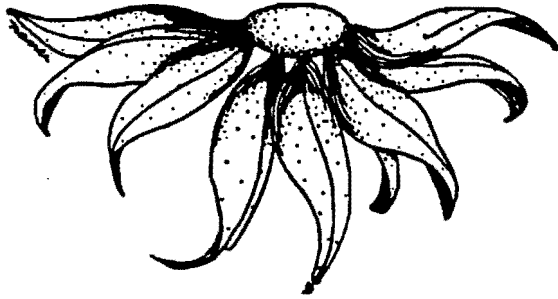


the wild ones



The Outside Story

newsletter for natural landscapers

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Bayside, Wisconsin

Please Help: Every decade or two there is a push for natural roadsides in Wisconsin. The last glorious effort was in 1976 under Governor Lucey with his Natural Beauty Council. At that time, Vicki Nuzzo spent a year trying to teach Dane County road maintenance crews how to seed and plant prairie species. The idea peaked during the mid-seventies. Then Vicki burned out, Lucey left office, and there was no money in the budget. So the men returned to their spray, mow, no-thought, no-care policies.

Last year, on October 24, the officers from the Citizens Natural Resources Association met with the Department of Transportation's maintenance engineer, Ted Stephenson. We inspired him to form the Roadside Vegetation Management Committee which has been meeting each month since last spring. Much to our delight (Harrington, Vorpahl, & Otto's) we've discovered that Ted and his three landscapers are on "our side"!! A beautiful brochure has just been published with photos of prairie flowers and an overview of *liatris aspera* and *solidago speciosa* held together on the land with short grasses. A dream for a front yard in late August! Please, please write for your free copy and plead with the DOT not to mow our roadsides and to plant prairie flowers. The Department is so sensitive to comments from the public, especially written ones. Address: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Box 7916, Madison, Wisconsin 53707.

P.S. Vicki will be one of our speakers on February 17, 1990 at our UWM seminar.



SILVERWEED *Potentilla anserina*

PRAIRIE

Silverweed is an ideal groundcover for an area of poor, dry soil. It requires the full sun of a roadside or southfacing slope, and spreads quickly by runners to cover bare soil. Leaves are a rich green above, silvery green below. Buttery yellow blossoms $\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter appear in early summer. Perennial.

Workshop Preview: The February 17, 1990 Natural Landscaping Seminar will be held in the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee's Wisconsin Room and The Cinema. Speakers and their subjects are:

JOHN DIEKELMANN, author of Natural Landscaping, will be our keynote speaker (This is the first of a series of keynote speakers in memory of Julie Marks.) VICKI NUZZO will be discuss the management of natural landscapes; DAVID KOPITZKE will show techniques of growing wildflowers; LORRIE OTTO will present slides of front yards growing naturally; NEIL DIBOLL will give suggestions for prairie restorations in front yards; DONALD VORPAHL will help do-it-yourself home owners plan natural yards; CAROL BANGS will show how to landscape with plant communities in shade; and JOANN GILLESPIE will concentrate on plants for wet areas.

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Secretarial Notes:

SEPTEMBER showed our club officers just what a dedicated bunch of "die-hards" we "Wild Ones" really are. After realizing that the pouring rain was not going to let-up for our scheduled yard tours, our president, Deb Harwell, cancelled the meeting, figuring that nobody would show up. WRONG!! About twenty members did come. Sarah Stokes, of the Audubon staff, showed the group a movie - The Last Strong Hold of the Eagles - until Deb could rush over. Thank you, Sarah! Lorrie Otto once again "saved the day" by giving a talk about one of the yards that we were scheduled to tour that day.

The yard that Lori spoke about was Julie Marks' berms on Brown Deer Road. Many members helped plant wildflowers there during Julie's fight with cancer. Julie, a founding member of Wild Ones, has since passed away, but as Lorrie told us so well, her berms live on as a glowing tribute to Julie's dedication to native landscaping. These berms are not only a tribute but Julie provided us with an opportunity to learn about planting native transplants and seeds. In effect, Julie and her husband, Phil, funded an educational resource project for us. A brief summary of some of what we learned:

BUTTERFLYWEED *Asclepias tuberosa* PRAIRIE
Bold orange long-lasting flowers. Does quite well in regular garden soil. Newly germinated plants will require two years before blossoming while a transplant should bloom the first year. Sun-loving perennial.

WILD GERANIUM *Geranium maculatum*
OPEN WOODLAND
Late in spring large flowers with pale pink veined petals appear on this perennial wildflower. It thrives in good soil in areas of light shade, but often also does quite well in full sun if given good care.



> DON'T fertilize prairie transplants or seeds. Prairie plants DO NOT like fertilizer, but WEEDS do! Fertilizing the berms produced a large crop of weeds the following spring, which grew up quickly, shaded the berms, and kept the soil cool. Prairie plants need warm soil, so this shading retarded the sprouting and growth of prairie plants and seeds.

> Transplants should be planted in the spring rather than fall. Put them in the soil and mulch heavily. This way you will reduce weed growth, and you won't have to search through the weeds to find your transplants.

> When planting seed mix, plant the grass seeds in the spring when the soil is WARM, since they will only germinate under these conditions.

Our OCTOBER meeting was our traditional seed gathering event. We were divided into two groups. One group went to Milt Ettenheim's yard where they were further divided into those collecting seeds for clay soil, and those wanting seeds for sandy soil. Others went to a site on N. 76th Street to dig up pink, purple, and white aster plants for their yards.

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Next Meeting: In November, Dan Boehlke will be talking to us about woodland wildflowers. Rather than speak in generalized terms as he has in past visits to our meetings, he will be explaining how to establish specific species in woodland gardens. He'll include cultural suggestions and information on white trillium, wild geranium, wild ginger etc. His talk will discuss root systems on through to the mature plants. Don't miss it! Dan is a wealth of information!

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An Update on the December meeting: The Earthcare video will be an interview of John Diekelmann in his Madison yard. Wild Ones has toured that yard. John will be the keynote speaker at our February seminar.



WILD BERGAMOT, BEEBALM *Monarda fistulosa*
PRAIRIE
A wild mint with dense heads of pinkish to pale lilac blossoms that appear in mid-summer. The leaves and flowers give off a pungent aroma when crushed — some people use it combined with other herbs in tea. This wildflower likes sunny spots or sites with very light shade. Perennial.

PURPLE CONEFLOWER *Echinacea purpurea*
PRAIRIE
Bold reddish purple 'petals' around a deep red central disc. These sturdy wildflowers with vigorous foliage grow 2 to 3 feet tall and withstand drought well. A sun-loving perennial.



11/89