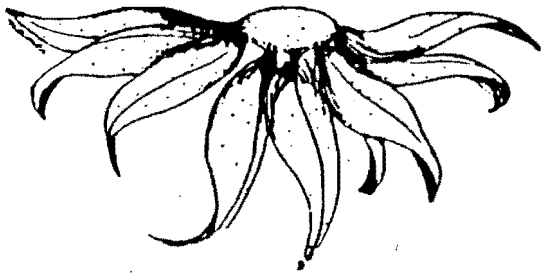


wild ones



# The Outside Story

newsletter for natural landscapers

Vol. 5 No. 3

May - June 1992

Bayside, Wisconsin

More than a century ago Chief Seattle said:

"The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

Modern civilization's failure to recognize this fundamental interconnection between man and earth is at the root of the global environmental crisis and biotic Armageddon. As Senator Gore observes in his book *Earth in Balance*:

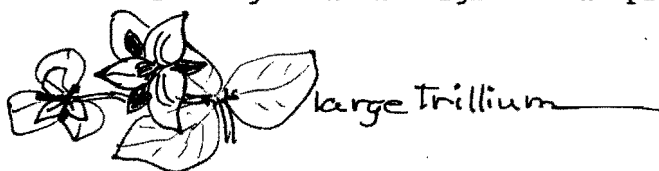
"We have misunderstood who we are, how we relate to our place in creation, and why our very existence assigns us a duty of moral alertness to the consequences of what we do. A civilization that believes itself to be separate from the world may pretend not to hear, but there is indeed a sound when a tree falls in the forest."

Weed laws, which have been used to prosecute and prohibit natural landscapes, are nothing more than a manifestation of this fundamental misunderstanding of our place within nature.

For the past year, I have represented five natural landscapers engaged in a David and Goliath battle with the City of Chicago over its weed law. (Schmidling v. Chicago, 91 C 3506). In the course of that litigation, I have learned about weed laws which work to satisfy the concerns of neighbors and local officials while at the same time promote an environmentally beneficial alternative to the blight of the "traditional suburban lawn." An examination of the four generations of weed laws demonstrates where we are and how far we need to go before returning at least our yards to a harmonious relationship with our natural environment. What follows is a history of the laws and the direction progressive communities are turning in the regulation of "weeds."

In the beginning there were no "weed laws" other than state regulation of plants noxious to agriculture. However, post-WWII suburban migration created laws to promote and protect lawns. Clipped, manicured grass is evidence of the detachment that our post-industrial society has from nature. Lawns serve as a physical and psychological "moat" between the homeowner and the world; as a status symbol to delineate the suburban homeowner from his city brethren who has neither land nor resources to make such a visible statement of wealth; and in a land of cookie-cutter tract housing, as a kind of conformity. The first generation, and most onerous laws enacted in the forties, banned "weeds" above an arbitrary height. Chicago's ordinance is a prime example of such an ill-founded and unworkable regulation by flatly outlawing "any weeds in excess of an average height of 10 inches." What is a "weed?"

With the publication of *Silent Spring* and the environmental awareness of the sixties, homeowners began, in small numbers, to question the wisdom of maintaining a traditional suburban lawn. They began to plant alternative landscapes, including wildflowers and native grasses. These practices collided directly with the establishment's rigid view of what was proper groundcover for a home. Some municipalities prosecuted those who chose native landscapes in cases like Rockville MD v. Steward; College Station TX v. Baker; New Berlin WI v. Hager; and Little Rock AR v. Allison. Sometimes local governments ignored the practice or owners discontinued it after a time.



(continued on page 10)

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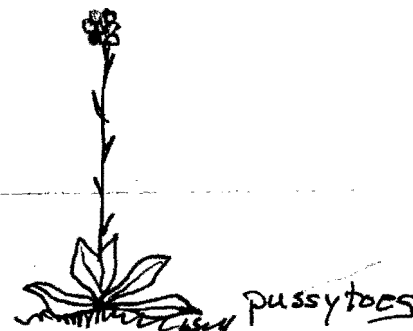
# From your Editor

This newsletter which focuses on natural landscaping and the community is being sent to four Wild Ones chapters. As we make adjustments to a larger number of groups and more members, you may experience some slight delays in receiving your issue. We are working on improving each one and including news from groups at north and south Milwaukee, Green Bay, and Northern Illinois.

In this issue, you'll find Attorney Bret Rappaport's interesting article about the evolution of weed laws and Deb Harwell's exciting environmental education project at Indian Hill School where students and teachers are celebrating the coming of spring to the school areas they planted last fall. A copy of the reprint of "The What and Why of Natural Roadsides" by James Ritzer is yours for the asking by sending me a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Our next issue will highlight prairie plants. We welcome contributions (letters, articles, drawings, etc.) Thanks to everyone whose contributions helped this time. - Carol Chew

## Letter



Dear Editor:

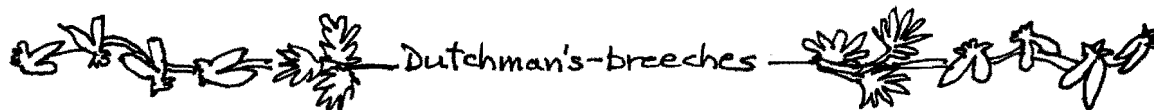
In the March-April issue, Annette Alexander shared her experience of building a small outdoor pond for her yard. She said they used a hard plastic preshaped pond, but planned to replace it with a larger pool liner.

A word of warning about that. We had a small goldfish pond for two years, made from a double layer of black plastic sheeting. Last year the raccoons found it. Their sharp claws ripped the sheeting to shreds as they hunted (with some success) the goldfish. I don't know if a pool liner is tough enough to prevent that.

Now we use a large hard plastic tub for the pond. We also stacked some rocks in it so the goldfish can hide from the raccoons.

Rick Clark, Northern Illinois Chapter

Drawings and lettering in this issue by Lucy Schumann.



# The Inside Story

Compiled by  
Janice Stiefel

## COMMON DANDELION (*Taraxacum officinale*) Composite or Daisy Family

**OTHER NAMES:** Tramp with the Golden Head, Priest's Crown, Swine's Snout, Lion's Tooth, Cankerwort, Milk-Witch, Irish Daisy, Monk's-Head, Puff-Ball, Peasant's Cloak, Yellow Gowan, Doon-Head Clock, Heart-Fever-Grass, Herba Urinaria, and many more.

**HABITAT:** Lawns, fields, and roadsides.

**DESCRIPTION:** A solitary flower head, with numerous yellow ray flowers, blooms atop a slender, milky stem. The flower heads are about 1½" wide. The bracts under the flower heads are narrow, pointed, with the outer ones being bent backward. The basal leaves are 2-16" long, deeply and irregularly toothed and lobed. The fruit has long white bristles on top. This fruiting mass becomes silky, downy, with a globular head when ripe.  
**Height:** 2-18" **Flowering:** March-September



**COMMENTS:** The number of incisions in the leaves is indicative of the amount of sunlight the plant receives. If the plant grows in full sun the leaves will be deeply toothed; if it grows in a shaded area, they will only be slightly toothed. The plant will bloom only when it gets sufficient sunlight.

The Common Dandelion is naturalized from Europe. It is considered a symbol of **time and love**. The leaf contains ten times the amount of Vitamin A as lettuce as well as more Vitamin C, iron, and protein. Vineland, New Jersey, the Dandelion-growing capital of the U.S., produces them as a commercial crop. The roots are often ground and pulverized to make Dandelion coffee, which when well prepared, is hard to distinguish from real coffee. A delicious wine can be made from the freshly opened blossoms; and a yellow dye for wool can be extracted from its flowers and roots. Dandelion ranks high among honey-producing plants, thanks to its bounteous stores of pollen and nectar. No fewer than 93 different kinds of insects help themselves to its lavish larder.

The only power that seems to have eluded the Dandelion through all the centuries and across many thousands of miles is the power to win the, otherwise so generous, American hearts.

**MEDICINAL USE:** Dandelion has been **appreciated** and used since the early cultures of Egypt, as far back as the 10th Century. In spring Dandelion leaves and roots produce mannitol, a substance used in the treatment of hypertension and weak heart throughout Europe. Naturopathic physician, John Lust, stated that "Dandelion root is good for all kinds of liver problems, including hepatitis, cirrhosis, jaundice, and toxicity in general, as well as getting rid of gallstones." "For those with a problem of being able to see clearly in the dark, the substance called helenin found in Dandelion flowers may be just the ticket." According to the Journal of the American Medical Association for June 23, 1951, which carried this report, the blossoms also contain Vitamins A and B<sub>2</sub>.

Tea from the plant has been used to treat measles, mumps, and chicken pox, as well as all types of upper respiratory infections, ranging from pneumonia to chronic bronchitis. In former times, the juice was prescribed for malignant growths and frequent applications of it to warts, was said to make them turn black and drop off.

Because no part of the plant is considered poisonous, herbalists recommend it freely. In addition to the above-mentioned ailments, it has also been credited with stimulating circulation, cleansing the blood, aiding sluggish digestion, curing stomachaches, calming nerves, and eliminating cholesterol. When digging the roots for medicinal purposes, use only the fat single roots, not the thin forked ones.

**NAME ORIGIN:** The **Genus Name**, *Taraxacum* (Ta-raks'a-kum) comes from the Greek words taraxos for "disorder," and akos, meaning "remedy." The **Species Name**, *officinale* (off-fi-si-nay-le) means "producing, or thought to produce, a medicine." The name, Swine's Snout, comes from the shape of the forming seed head, which is bulbous at the base and then tapers into a snout. The Irish used to call it Heart-Fever-Grass, probably because of its ability as a bitter to ease heartburn.

The **Common Name**, Dandelion, is French, meaning "tooth of the lion." This name, or its equivalent, is used in every country where the plant grows and is descriptive of the toothed margins of the leaves.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** Some people say the roots are best dug in September and October and, if they are to be used for food or medicine, should not be more than one year old. **Never** harvest the leaves, blossoms or roots from an area that has been treated with chemicals.

If everything could be said about the Dandelion, it would take many pages. I've just reported the highlights of the vast amount of information that has been published about this plant. Perhaps someday, when the price of medicine is beyond the realm of the average American's pocketbook, we will be forced to accept the virtues of this maligned and despised "weed" as a treatment or cure for what ails us.

# State Grants Nurture Environmental Education

Test tubes, Bunsen burners, microscopes, and petri dishes are all items you'd find in a science laboratory. But at Indian Hill School in Milwaukee, the laboratory is quite unique. Over the past year, the students have completed the restoration of their "outdoor" laboratory, a half-acre garden of prairie, wetland and woodland wildflowers that provide a natural setting for learning about nature and preserving the environment.

This project is one of more than 50 environmental and curriculum-planning programs funded with grants from the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board since it was established in 1990.

## Setting the course for environmental education

"The board was created to help promote and strengthen environmental education efforts," said Sheena Carey, general supervisor of Wisconsin Electric's Consumer Information & Education Division and member of the Wisconsin



*Students at Indian Hill School in Milwaukee planted over 700 wildflowers to create their "outdoor" laboratory to learn about the environment.*

## Environmental Education Board.

"It's the board's philosophy that through practical educational experiences, citizens will gain a better understanding of the environment and establish positive beliefs and attitudes about protecting the world around them."

Board members represent educational, business and environmental communities. It is their charter to fund grant requests that will educate citizens about environmental awareness.

"Never before has there been a systematic way for awarding requests," said Carey. "While many public and private organizations fund environmental education programs, the programs

usually are evaluated on their individual contributions. The board funds programs that can be shared and adapted into other educational curriculums. Over the last two years, approximately \$200,000 in grants have been awarded."

"It's wonderful that we have this 'field experience' in our backyard," said Karen Winicki, Indian Hill School principal. "But, this setting also invites other students and civic groups to share in the learning."

"Pre-school students are also involved. We expect that by the end of the third grade, the children will be able to not only identify 18 different plants, but know the insects that depend on them as well."

The board funds programs that can be infused into all subject areas, especially art, health, science and social studies.

At Indian Hill, students write poems about the prairie in one class, while in others, the students build birdhouses to help protect the birds from the winter season. "The students learn something year-round," said Winicki. "The program helps nurture a lifetime of love for the environment."

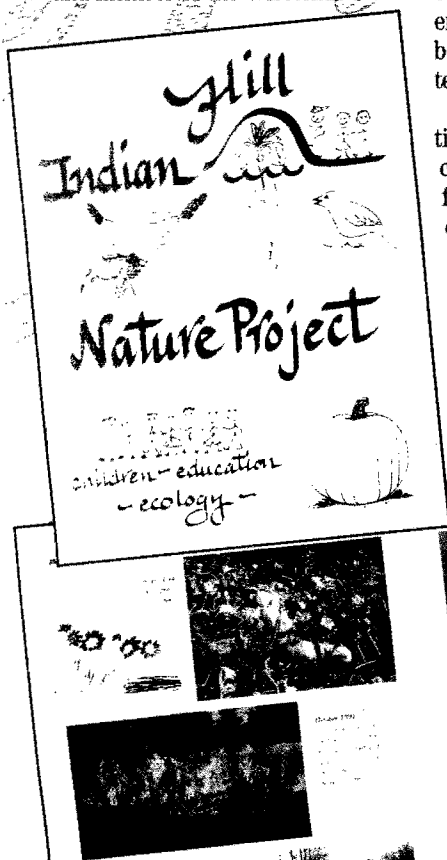
## Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful

Schools are not the only groups that can apply for grants. In 1991, Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful, a non-profit education organization, received a grant to implement a three-component solid waste management education program entitled, "Let's Not Waste The Nineties." This program involved students, teachers and residents of the Greater Milwaukee area.

"Wisconsin Electric is proud to be a part of this statewide effort," said Carey. "It's just one more way we can demonstrate our commitment to environmental stewardship."

The state also has established the Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. Under the center's direction, a teacher-training program was developed.

To learn more about the board and its application process write to the: Wisconsin Environmental Education Board, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841.



The LAKE COUNTY DEFENDERS  
Presents Questions and Answers About



# "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS

**Q. WHAT ARE "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS?**

A. They are a lot more than just fertilizer. "Lawn care" chemicals include: Weed and Feed type products whether applied by lawn spraying companies or sold by the bag or bottle in hardware stores, garden shops etc. to "control" weeds, insects, crabgrass, dandelions or fungus.

**Q. WHO USES "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS?**

A. If you or your neighbors hire a "lawn care" spraying company or buy any of the pesticides listed above--YOU DO.

**Q. CAN "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS MAKE ME OR MY FAMILY SICK?**

A. YES! The pesticides used in the name of "controlling" weeds, insects, etc. are toxic--cide means kill. Many people mistakenly believe that these are "magic bullets"...harmful only to "pests" or "weeds". Nothing could be further from the truth. These chemicals are called broad-spectrum biocides, which simply means they are poisonous to many kinds of life including you...your family...your neighbors...your pets...fruit and shade trees...garden plants and birds and other wildlife.

These chemicals include components of Agent Orange, nerve-gas type insecticides, artificial hormones and products the Federal Government has been prohibited from using on its own uninhabited property. Some names are: 2,4-D\*; Bensulide; Captan\*; Dacthal\*; Diazinon\*; Dicamba\*; Dursban\*; Mecoprop\* and Kelthane.

So called "inert" ingredients which may comprise 50-99% of a pesticide formula may be more toxic than the "active" ingredients. Nevertheless, EPA allows dangerous "inerts" such as Zylene and TriChloroEthylene (TCE) to be kept secret from the public and remain unlisted on the label.

In other cases, pesticides such as DDT or EDB, which have been officially "banned" have simply been reclassified as "inert" ingredients and allowed to remain in pesticide formulas without any notice to the public. In the case of DDT, EPA was able to hide this reclassification for over 12 years.

\*indicates a pesticide registered with faked health tests (see below)

**Q. HOW CAN I OR MY FAMILY BE POISONED BY "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS?**

A. Poison is absorbed through the skin, by mouth, or by breathing sprays, dusts or vapors. You or your children may be poisoned if you: apply the chemical or are present during application; touch contaminated grasses, shoes, clothing or lawn furniture; or put contaminated toys or fingers in the mouth.

**Q. ARE "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS SAFE WHEN DRY?**

A. NO! "Lawn care" chemicals may remain active from a month to a year or more. During this time they can release toxic vapors. Breathing the vapors--even from neighboring lawns-- or playing on or mowing contaminated grass can cause illness. Statements that these chemicals are biodegradable are highly misleading. This simply means they break down into other chemicals which may be even more poisonous than the original pesticide.

**Q. WHY DOESN'T MY DOCTOR DIAGNOSE PESTICIDE POISONING?**

A. Chemical companies are not required to release pesticide health information to the medical profession. Doctors are apt to misdiagnose the symptoms of pesticide poisoning as "allergy" "the flu" or some other illness. Doctors may even tell you that your symptoms are psychosomatic or "all in your head". Except for industrial accidents, poisoning is rarely considered as a cause of illness and tests which could confirm it are expensive and rarely performed.

**Q. WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF "LAWN CARE" PESTICIDE POISONING?**

A. They are deceptively simple. Pesticides attack the central nervous system and other vital body centers. Exposure may produce one or more of the following symptoms: sore nose, tongue or throat; burning skin or ears; rash; ear aches or infections; excessive sweating or salivation; chest tightness, asthma-like attacks, coughing; muscle pain, seizures, headache, eye pain, blurred or dim vision, numbness or tingling in hands or feet, nausea, vomiting, cramps, diarrhea, incontinence, anorexia, tissue swelling, arthritis-like complaints, anxiety, suicidal depression, irritability, angry outbursts, disturbed sleep, learning disability, fatigue, dizziness, unexplained fever, irregular heartbeat, elevated blood pressure, spontaneous bleeding, stroke, death.

People who show no apparent symptoms after pesticide exposure may still be harmed. Long-term problems associated with "lawn care" poisons include: lowered male fertility; miscarriage; birth defects; chemical sensitivity; immune suppression; cataracts; liver and kidney dysfunction; heart disturbances and cancer.

**Q. ARE PEOPLE ACTUALLY GETTING SICK FROM LAWN CHEMICALS?**

A. Yes. This is not just a theoretical problem. Many people throughout our area are chronically ill from early spring through late fall as a result of the increasing use of lawn pesticides. In some cases, the illness is actually life threatening. Each "lawn care" season, many are forced to leave their homes and jobs, sometimes permanently, in order to escape pesticide induced illness.

**Q. WOULD THE GOVERNMENT ALLOW CHEMICALS ON THE MARKET IF THEY WEREN'T SAFE?**

A. Unfortunately yes. Most people mistakenly believe that EPA protects us from harmful pesticides. EPA, itself, makes no such claims. Labelling pesticides as "safe", "harmless", or "non-toxic to humans or pets" is a violation of Federal Law. According to Congress, 9 out of 10 pesticides in current use lack the minimum required health tests. Executives of Industrial Bio-Test Labs were recently given jail terms for faking health and safety tests for 200 of the most common pesticides. Nevertheless, EPA has allowed these poisons to stay on the market.

**Q. CAN "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS CONTAMINATE MY DRINKING WATER?**

A. Yes. Both pesticides and fertilizers can and do migrate into public and private wells. Unfortunately there is no program for testing our drinking water for pesticide contamination.

(over)

**Q. HAVE I THE RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT PESTICIDES I AM EXPOSED TO IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?**

A. NO. Most spray companies tell neither their customers nor neighborhood residents which chemicals they use or the known health effects from them. Neither will they notify you in advance before they spray in your neighborhood. Some distribute misleading information about the safety of their products by word of mouth or in "factsheets". The largest applicators have banded together to use the courts and the legislatures to prevent passage of laws that would give you the right to know.

**Q. WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES TO TOXIC "LAWN CARE" CHEMICALS?**

A. First ask yourself, "What did I or my family do before the mass promotion of lawn chemicals?" In most cases the answer will be little or nothing. Nevertheless, both you and your lawn managed to survive. You both still can. The "lawn care" industry is a recent creation of chemical companies in order to expand the market for older agricultural chemicals. Through skillful advertising, this industry has worked to create an imaginary ideal of the "perfect" green lawn, and an artificial desire in you to have one. The truth is no matter how much time and money you spend there is no such thing as a perfect lawn. The key to a healthy lawn is rich healthy soil. Poisons and chemical fertilizers can actually destroy healthy soil.

**THE FOLLOWING TIPS CAN HELP YOU TO A HEALTHY LAWN WITHOUT UNHEALTHY CHEMICALS**

**Mowing**--let it grow! Close and frequent cutting stresses grass plants. Weed seedlings need sun. Grass that is 2 1/2 to 3 inches tall shades weeds out and holds moisture in the soil. Mow when dry and in the evening or the cool of the day. Keep blade sharp. Leave nitrogen rich clippings behind to degrade into soil building compost. Scatter or rake up any large clumps of clippings and use for compost or mulch.

**Fertilizer**--chemical fertilizers add salt to the soil, kill soil building bacteria, promote soil compaction, shallow roots, thatch and fungus growth. The quick fix of green they give, creates a dependence for the next quick fix--turning your lawn into a junkie. Grass clippings, compost and manure are better answers. They return needed bacteria and enzymes to the soil along with nutrients. Including clover or other nitrogen fixing plants in your lawn can make it self-fertilizing.

**Pesticides**--kill worms, beneficial insects. Healthy lawns don't have insect problems. Weed killers can harm gardens, trees, shrubs and breed resistant weeds. They also kill nitrogen fixing (self-fertilizing) plants in the lawn and can contaminate garden produce.

**Dandelions**--cut them off at the root, several inches below the ground. Reseed bare spots. Despite the ads, most won't grow back. Or...Learn to live with them. They only look "bad" twice a year. A quick mowing can solve that. During August they may be the only green spot in your lawn.

**Fungus**--grows in wet, thatchy, over-fertilized lawns. Drain, dry out, de-thatch, re-add soil bacteria (from compost or Ringer Research--address below) and reseed. Cut-back or eliminate the use of high nitrogen fertilizer.

**De-Thatch**--but not until late spring or early summer (it stresses the lawn). Reseed bare spots.

**Aerate**--twice a year. Compacted soil promotes weeds. Add soil loosener (compost, gypsum) and reseed.

**Reseed**--bare spots and thinning lawns. Soak seed (mixed with annual rye) in water overnight for quick growth to choke out weeds.

**Water**--infrequently, deeply, in evening. Allow grass to dry out thoroughly between waterings.

**Test**--soil ph, nutrients, composition to determine its condition.

**Species**--Choose the right one. Bluegrass is popular, but unsuited to most areas. Sod (deliberately grown as thatch, and laid on unprepared soil) is a disaster waiting to happen. An 80/20 mix of fescue and rye grows well in most areas. Pick varieties that resist drought, disease, need little mowing or fertilizer, are suited to available light and traffic. Consider switching from heavily manicured lawn to alternate groundcovers, especially in hard to maintain areas. Natural landscaping uses hardier plants, is attractive, easy to maintain and encourages native wildlife.

**Expense**--at \$30 per treatment, chemicals cost you from \$100-\$200 per year.

**Search**--for a lawn company that uses no toxic chemicals. They exist but are harder to find. Be sure...be specific...you want no pesticides or herbicides! Get it in writing!

**Cross**--the street for a better perspective. Look at your neighbors lawn and look back at your own. Yours will look better and his will look worse.

Think...no agency protects you from exposure to dangerous pesticides. Beware of misleading ads...educate yourself...then decide.

**--FOR FURTHER READING--**

*Pesticides and Human Health*, by William Hallenbeck PhD & Kathleen Cunningham-Burns, PhD 1985, Springer-Verlag, New York

*Recognition and Management of Pesticide Poisonings*, by Donald P. Morgan, MD, PhD, 1982 US EPA, Washington, DC

*Toxicology, The Basic Science of Poisons*, by John Doull, MD, PhD et al, 1980 MacMillan, New York

*A Bitter Fog, Herbicides and Human Health*, by Carol Van Strum, 1983 Sierra Club Books, San Francisco

*Faking It*, by Keith Schneider, Amicus Journal, Spring 1983

*Weed Free Lawns*, by Elaine Mohr, Organic Gardening, May 1985

*Pesticides in Contract Lawn Maintenance*, Rachel Carson Council, 8940 Jones Mill RD, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

*Healthy Lawns Without Toxic Chemicals*, Rachel Carson Council

*Weed Control Factsheet*, Citizens for a Better Environment, 33 E Congress, Ste. 523, Chicago, IL 60605

*Integrated Weed Management for Urban Areas*, Bio-Integral Resource Center, Box 7414 Berkeley CA 94707-0414

*Success with Lawns Starts With Soil*, Ringer Research Corp, 6860 Flying Cloud Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

*Nature's Design, the Practical Guide to Natural Landscaping*, by Carol Smyser, 1982 Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA

# Wildcare ....

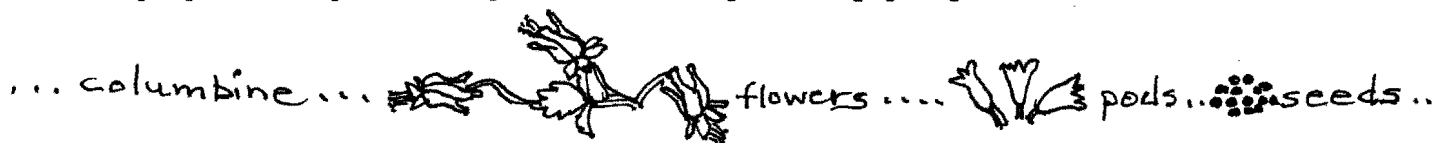


**MAY/First Week:** A leaf of wild leek may still be tender enough to wrap around a grilled bratwurst... Prepare well for Dig Day. Favorite aids include saucer sleds with clothesline handles, gloves, drinking water, and snacks. Regular shovels are better than hand trowels, and quart & gallon containers better than regular flowerpots. Get a commitment from family members to help plant your finds; even short amounts of time will help. Make a point of naming a freshly planted corner after your helpers (Carrie's Cranesbills, etc.) Share the enjoyment... Seeds of many spring-flowering woodland plants should be planted as soon as they are ripe, directly in the woods if watering is convenient, or in shaded flats. Seeds that can be collected now are: Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema atrorubens*); Green Dragon (*A. dracontium*); Wild Calla (*Caltha palustris*); Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*); Great Merrybells (*Uvularia grandiflora*); Wild Oats (*U. sessilifolia*); the 4 native lilies; and a few of the trillium species.

**Second Week:** To identify a "mystery species" in your yard, the best (often the only) time is when it's flowering. I like the arrows in Peterson & McKinney's *Field Guide to Wildflowers*. to help distinguish between close relatives. Take photos, sketch details; if you can spare 1 or 2 flowerheads and leaves, press them between blotters until dry (Use no plastic.) Local nature centers have I.D. classes.

**Third Week:** Three dry/dry mesic prairie plants are ready for seed collection: Pasque-flower (*Anemone patens*); Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*); and Field Pussy-toes (*Antennaria neglecta*)... Planting young trees? In nature, spacing's irregular, and multiple trunks are common for many species, such as linden, amelanchier, & carpinus. Leave lower branches on, to protect from damage by velvet-rubbing deer, and to give a more natural appearance.

**Fourth Week:** In your newly-seeded prairie, resist the temptation to pull out weed seedlings by the roots. They are controlling erosion and shading the emerging seedlings. If any weeds bother you, simply nip off flower heads.



**JUNE/First Week:** Collect seeds from Wood Betony (*Pedicularis canadensis*), and Plantain-leaved Pussy-toes (*Antennaria plantaginifolia*)... Watch for the unique seed-case forming on Twinleaf (*Jeffersonia diphylla*)... To keep your "public" or "street-side" asters compact, pinch them back now... Sometimes a small sign can change puzzled attitudes to positive ones. Be descriptive, not defensive. I'm considering "Wis. Southern Mesic Forest Restoration / in progress", next to an amelanchier that looks great every day of the year.

**Second Week:** Most of your natural yard needs no pruning at all. If native shrubs near public view need a bit of pruning, the best time is just after flowering. Cut dead and rubbing branches first, then a few all the way to the ground, for renewal.

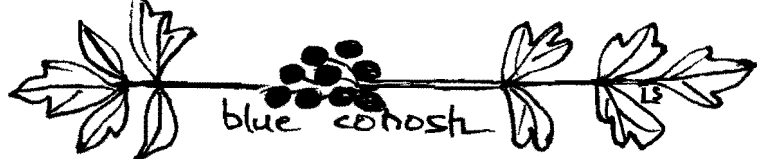
**Third Week:** Mow newly-seeded and 2nd-year prairies to a height of 6 inches, by hand or with a hay-mower. Try a hand-sickle or scythe.

**Fourth Week:** Harvest seed in earnest, of the following: Alum-root (*Heuchera richardsonii*); Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium campestre*); Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*); Two-flowered Cynthia (*Krigia biflora*); Wild Geranium/Cranesbill (*Geranium maculatum*); Wild Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*); Needle Grass (*Stipa spartea*); Balsam Ragwort (*Senecio pauperculus*); and Swamp Saxifrage (*Saxifraga pensylvanica*). - Barb Glassel





# Chapter Notes



**March:** See Bret Rappaport's article beginning on page one.

**April:** Want to know something about prairie plants and seeds? Ask Randy Powers who was our April speaker. Randy became interested in native plants as a child when he helped his parents naturalize their yard. After graduating from college, he continued his interest as a hobby which eventually turned into a business called the Prairie Future Seed Company. The four-year-old business is located in Menomonee Falls and has a beautiful seed catalog. He currently markets his seeds at 36 garden and nature centers throughout Wisconsin.

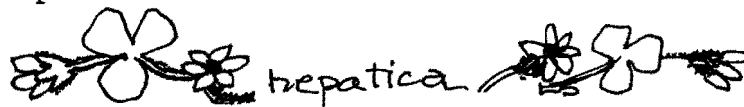
Powers discussed prairie grasses and legumes and then treated us to a slide show of his prairie flower photographs which were arranged according to season. Randy noted that the spring blooming plants are often missing from our natural areas. Seed production of these plants is very low, and the seeds drop immediately when ready, making collecting difficult. He is working hard to have these seeds for sale. (A spring burn may destroy the buds on the early bloomers for that year.)

Perhaps the unique thing that Randy brought to us is special interest and knowledge about prairie seeds. He has 2 1/2 acres and a green house that he uses for seed production. He also travel around the state collecting certain seed specimens. We were shown fascinating magnified photographs! Each type has its own design and built-in survival strategy. Some have tiny hairs or bristles to help them stick to things or work themselves down into the soil.

The importance of cold stratification when propagating seeds was stressed. Seeds that have gone through it have a 70-90% germination rate, versus 10-15% rate for those that don't. It should last six to eight weeks.

For germination and successful growth of legume seeds (lead plant, milk or cream vetch, white indigo, trefoils, bush clover, lupine, prairie clover, goats rue, etc.) use the following three steps:

1. Scarify or hull the seeds.
2. Cold stratify them.
3. When planting the seeds add nitrogen-fixing bacteria, inoculants for successful growth. Inoculants can be purchased at garden centers. Seeds will germinate, but won't grow without this.



Seeds grow better in light soil than clay soil which causes them to grow very slowly. A fungicide prevents the biggest problem which is "damping off." Seedlings should be transplanted from flats into pots between the growth of their first and second set of real leaves. - Kristin Summerfield

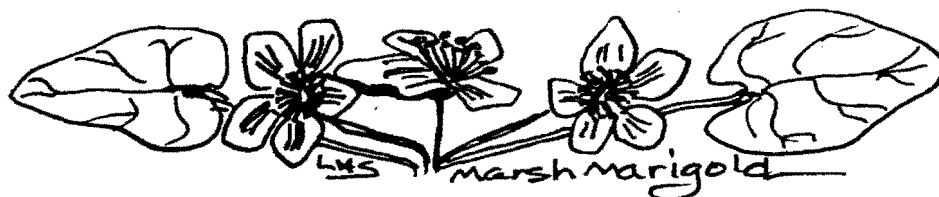
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**Green Bay's first "dig"** was a great success, according to Jim Jerzak. Developers who were contacted were very positive in their response and about twenty people participated in the early May event. The site had hundreds of trilliums which members were able to save from the bulldozers (and also to save the \$5 @ nursery cost.) The dig kicked off the outdoor season for the chapter which has a number of events planned.  
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**The Illinois Chapter** is off to a great start! About 85 people attended the first ever charter meeting and more than a dozen volunteered to be on the board and committees. People came from six counties: 61 from DuPage, 15 from Cook, 4 from Will, 3 from Kane, and 1 each from Lake and Carroll. Towns with the most people present were Downers Grove (11) Carol Stream (7), Naperville (6), and Chicago (5). Everyone was given a copy of the statement of purpose and a questionnaire. Returns showed the following interests: ground covers and ferns (47), bird and butterfly plants (45), woodland wildflowers (43), native trees, shrubs, and vines (42), prairie wildflowers (41), naturalizing flowers (39), vegetables, fruits, herbs (33). Forty-two were working in yards of their primary residence; 35 had average-sized suburban yards; 24 were just starting; 25 were in the process; 33 wanted no toxic chemicals used; and 30 were looking for energy efficient low-maintenance landscapes.



Vicki and Pat presented brief slide programs showing various alternative to mown lawns. Those present voted overwhelmingly to have another meeting in May to discuss more committees and learn about how to design a pleasing landscape. Ron Nowicki will give the program. We have planned several visits to people's yards during May, June, and July (See Calendar). There will be more activities in August and September. See you there!

The chapter wishes to thank the following organizations for donating start-up funds: The Planter's Palette, Winfield, IL; The Kane County Landscaping with Native Plants Seminar; The Native Plant Society of Illinois. - Pat Armstrong



**Wildflower Show, Sunday, June 7, Milwaukee Public Museum:** More than 300 species of native and naturalized flora will be on display at the fifth annual show. You'll find woodland, prairie, and wetland plants identified and grouped by families. This year prairie plants will be highlighted. Other attractions at the show include: landscaping with native plants, gardening to attract butterflies, protecting Wisconsin's endangered plants, identifying wildflowers, photographing plants in their habitats, native plant sale, information on plant conservation clubs, and display of winning entries in the 1992 Wildflower Photographic Competition. More information can be obtained from Milwaukee Public Museum, 800 West Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233 414/278-2702. Entries for the Wildflower Photographic Competition must be postmarked by Friday, May 15, 1992. You may hand deliver your entry to the museum's security desk in the front lobby (9am-5pm) or mail to the Botany Section at the above address.

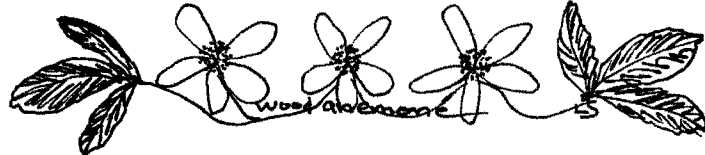
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**Botanical Club of Wisconsin** welcomes volunteer help in organizing field trips and contributing information for their publications. The club has 220 members and chapters in Stevens Point, La Crosse, Madison, and Southeastern (Milwaukee). Their spring meeting with the Wisconsin Academy of Science awarded grants to outstanding botany students. They also sponsored an 11-day trip to Belize, field trips to Southern Kettle Moraine and Door County, and programs on grassland management and other topics. Dues are \$7 per year. For more information, contact Susan Brahm (414/352-1304) or Theodore S. Cochrane, Department of Botany, UW-Madison (608/262-2792).  
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**Green Bay's Garden Walk** will feature a yard with natural landscaping this year. The Jarzak's native plantings were begun on a city lot four years ago with assistance from Don Vorpahl. Jim says the inspiration came from Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* and an article he read on the subject in the *Milwaukee Journal*. The event is sponsored by the Green Bay Botanical Gardens on July 14 from 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. The cost is \$8. Call 414/432-4224.



We're always interested when naturalizing gets media attention. An article in *Money*, "Digging for Growth," reported "gardens boost home values around 10%." Don and Eileen Herrling were pictured in their Appleton prairie garden which was planted by Neil Diboll five years ago. We all know the numerous benefits of natural landscaping, but when the public is informed of property value increases and maintenance cost savings up to 99% . . . well, money talks.

*Milwaukee Magazine* (April 1992) and *House and Garden* both have articles about Lorrie Otto and Wild Ones.



The second generation of weed laws began in Madison, Wisconsin, the first major city to recognize the legitimacy of natural landscapes by enacting an ordinance validating them. The Madison Ordinance requires the homeowner to file an application for a natural landscape and obtain approval from a majority of his neighbors. The ordinance represented a significance first step in the process of reversing the blight of environmentally harmful turf-lawns but has two serious flaws: the neighbor veto and the application/approval process. These requirements lead to a process of ad hoc "permission" to plant native plants and grasses. Furthermore, the premise of the ordinance is counter-intuitive. Why should natural landscapes be singled out as requiring permission when other "harmful" landscapes remain unregulated?

The third generation of weed laws remedied the failings of the Madison Ordinance by allowing natural landscaping without neighbor approval or city "permission." These laws retain the traditional prohibition of growing "weeds" but include a modification that safeguards native landscapes. One type of "modified weed law" is a ordinance requiring a set back from either the front or the perimeter of the lot. The vegetation within the area may not exceed a certain height, such as 10 or 12 inches, while the vegetation behind the set back remains unregulated. Distances range from 20 feet in rural areas to 2 or 3 feet for city lots. These laws have several important advantages and represent a good working compromise between the interest of local government, the homeowner, and neighbors. Primarily, set back ordinances allow for the unregulated growing of vegetation on a majority of the lot and creates a "tended" margin that satisfies neighbor/government concerns. It also solves practical problems created by large plants "lopping" over into neighbor yards or across sidewalks. These ordinances are easy to understand and enforce because they are clear and simple. The only drawback is that a portion of the yard is rendered off-limits for certain types of plants, but this liability is a small price to pay for an otherwise fair law.

The success of the set back ordinance is demonstrated by the City of White Bear Lake, Minnesota which had an extensive permit procedure applicable to native lawns, but abandoned that approach in 1990. According to Becky Abbott, a city official, the ordinance is a "success." No complaints have been received about homeowners with natural landscapes who have complied with the set back rule. Other places which have adopted or are considering a White Bear Lake Ordinance are Woodstock, Illinois and some Twin Cities suburbs.

The other "modified weed laws" are those that have broad exceptions for "native plantings," "wildlife plantings," and other environmentally beneficial landscapes. These laws, enacted in Boone County, and Harvard, Illinois expressly protect natural landscapers from prosecution under weed laws. They are simple to understand and balance the interests of the owner and neighbors.

The fourth generation of weed laws are no laws at all, coupled with pro-active measures, policies and laws to encourage the use of native plant landscapes. Long Grove, Illinois is a good example of a community that embodies this type of policy. Long Grove has no law regulating plant height. The village requires developers to include 100 foot scenic easements in their subdivisions planted with native plants, wildflowers, and grasses between homes and major streets. Long Grove has a naturalist on staff to advise developers and homeowners on how to cultivate and maintain natural landscapes and sells native plants and seed mixes to residents. It has a committee to review prairie restoration projects.

Slowly cities and villages are moving from repressive first generation weed laws to more progressive third and fourth generation attitudes. The progress is all too slow, and far too often efforts to change "weed laws" are met with opposition and misunderstandings. Many government officials and citizens believe natural landscapes exacerbates pollen, fire, and vector problems. The brief filed by the National Wildlife Federation in the Schmidling case refutes these misconceptions. Copies can be obtained from me at 312/726-0845 or from Craig Tufts (National Wildlife Federation) at 202/797-6800.

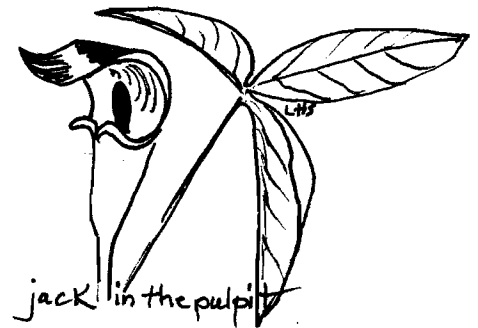
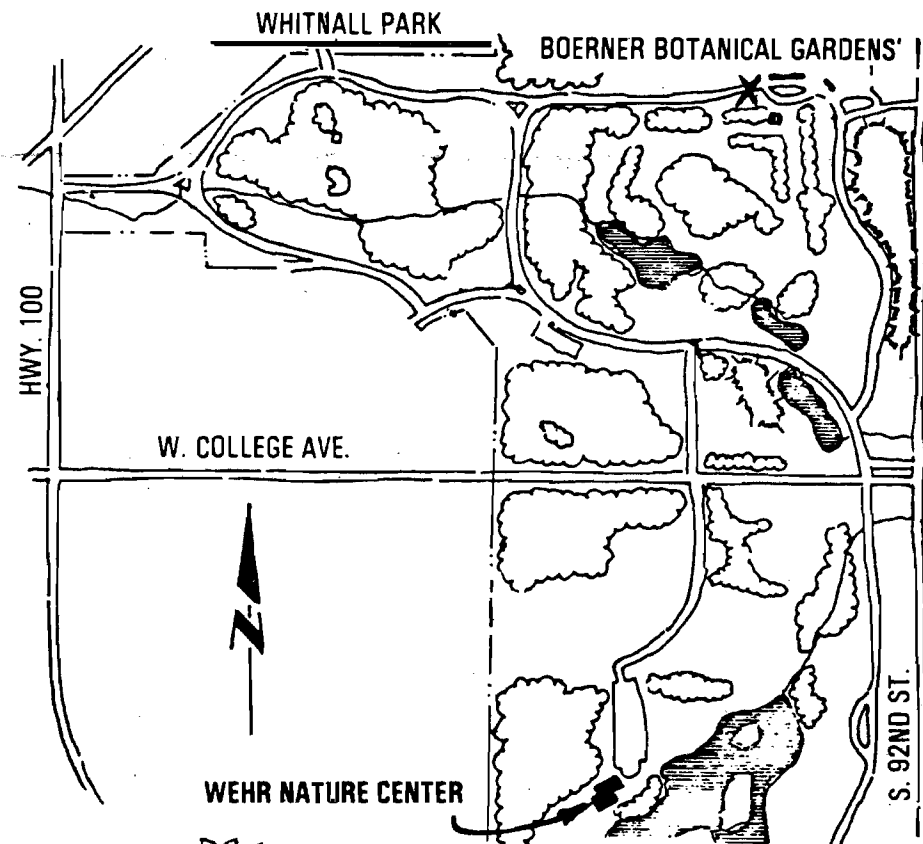


I suggest the following guidelines for use in crafting new weed ordinances:

1. The ordinance should protect the fundamental right of residents to choose their own landscaping.
2. The ordinance should ideally apply equally to all residents whether in a city, county, or state.
3. Any restrictions should have a rational basis such as a legitimate health or safety interest.
4. The ordinance must not legislate conformity or aesthetics nor allow residents to exercise control over their neighbors' landscapes.
5. The ordinance should not require the filing of an application, statement of intent, or management plan. There should be no review, approval process, or fees assessed against residents who intend to engage in legitimate natural landscaping.
6. In order to avoid harassment of natural landscapers, "weed commissioners" who enforce ordinances should be able to distinguish between those people growing permitted natural landscapes v. those with unpermitted growth.
7. Enforcement of the ordinance should be undertaken through due process of law which guarantees individuals the right to a fair adjudication of their rights.
8. The ordinance should address the problems of environmental degradation brought about by proliferation of high maintenance mono-cultural landscapes, and the indiscriminate use of toxic chemicals in landscape management. It should encourage the preservation and restoration of diverse, biologically stable natural plant communities, and environmentally sound practices. This will reduce environmental contaminants such as pesticides, fertilizers, pollutants, noise, and will help reduce the accumulation of yard waste.



- Bret Rappaport, Chicago attorney and recent Wild Ones' speaker



The Wehr Nature Center is part of the Milwaukee County Parks System. It has two hundred acres of prairie, oak savanna, woodlands, and wetlands, including a 20-acre lake. There are over five miles of trails which loop through and link the nature center's natural communities. The center is located in the southwest corner of the 660 acre Whitnall Park adjoining the Root River Parkway. The map shows the major entrance roads from Hales Corners, Franklin, Greenfield, and Greendale. The Wehr Natural Landscaping Club makes its home here.



# Calendar

Meetings are held on the second Saturday.....

9:30 a.m. at Schlitz Audubon Center  
1111 East Brown Deer Road  
Bayside, WI 53217 414/352-2880

and repeated at.....

1:30 p.m. at Wehr Nature Center  
9701 West College Avenue  
Franklin, WI 53132 414/425-8550

**Wild Ones - Natural Landscapers, Ltd.**

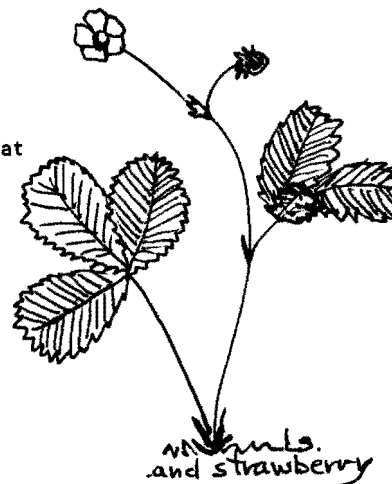
in Green Bay, meetings are held at.....


The Heritage Hill Visitors Center  
2640 South Webster Avenue  
Green Bay, WI 54301 414/448-5150

in Northern Illinois, meetings are held at.....

College of Du Page  
Twenty-second Street  
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 708/983-8404

May 9 - Milwaukee	Annual Dig
12 - N. Illinois	Field trip to Wendy Paulson's
28 - N. Illinois	7 p.m. Landscape Design with Ron Nowicki
June 10 - Green Bay	7 p.m. Field trip to Neshota Park
13 - Milwaukee	Field trip to Pat Armstrong's in Illinois. Meet at I-43 & Brown Deer Rd. Park & Ride at 9:45 a.m. or I-94 & 84th St. Park & Ride at 10 a.m. (Wehr group) Bring bag lunch. Register by June 1 with Judi Ficks for summer trips. Illinois group meets at Pat's yard at noon.
July 11 - Milwaukee	Field trip to Bob Ahrenhoister's. Meet at I-43 & Brown Deer Road Park & Ride at 9:45 a.m. or I-43 South & Hwy 100 (south of Layton) at 10 a.m. Bring bag lunch.
11 - N. Illinois	10 a.m. Field trip to Vicki and Ron Nowicki's.
19 - N. Illinois	1 p.m. Field trip to Wilma McCallister's.



*Isopyrum*  *false rue anemone*

wild ones



*The Outside Story*

newsletter for natural landscapers

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