

# The Outside Story

newsletter for natural landscapers

Vol. 6 No. 5

September - October 1993

One Dollar

## "Invasion of the aliens" leads to suggestions for new laws

Invasive non-native (exotic or alien) species threaten the biological integrity of many ecosystems, including our national parks and wildlife refuges. Often, these organisms are plants such as purple loosestrife, kudzu, yellow star thistle, and tamarisk. At least 88 national parks report a significant threat from invasive alien plants. The Bureau of Land Management has documented infestations on six million acres. It expects these will spread to an additional 20 million acres or about 24% of BLM's total area in continental United States by the next century.

Numerous natural areas protected by state programs and The Nature Conservancy are also suffering. (See "Invasion of the Weeds," *The Wisconsin Magazine, Milwaukee Journal*, June 6, 1993) Ecosystems are degraded or radically transformed, and quantities of herbicides are applied in an effort to control this "biological pollution."

This is clearly a national problem needing a national solution which would exclude new introductions of invasive organisms; curtail the spread of those already present; and control or eradicate infestations.

The statute excluding invasive alien plants is the Federal Noxious Weed Act (FNWA). Unfortunately, it has several glaring weaknesses limiting protection (*FEDERAL WEED ACT, page 3*)

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## Fall is a good time for seeding prairie area

It's seed gathering time and here are some suggested fall tips:

### Site Preparation

Remove existing weeds or other vegetation to give prairie seeds a good start. This can be done with a short duration herbicide such as Round-up or with methods described below.

On small areas opaque material can be used to smother existing vegetation while larger areas can be cultivated with conventional farm machinery.

Fall plowing is a first step in removing stubborn weeds from rich, heavy soils. Next spring, cultivate with a disk to a depth of 4-5 inches. After that, if quack grass is present, a springtooth harrow or digger brings roots to the surface where drying kills them. Shallow (2 inches) cultivation every two weeks until fall during the first growing season eliminates freshly germinated weed seedlings. Finally, drag to leave a clod-free bed.

Sandy, gravelly soils or previously cropped fields without heavy perennial weeds may only need several diskings prior to sowing seeds, rather than plowing and season-long cultivation.

Check the land's history to see if long-lasting herbicides such as Atrazine have been used which would affect prairie plantings.

### Fall Seeding

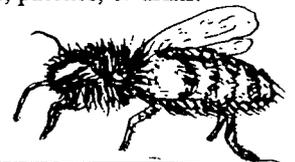
An advantage of fall planting is a high percentage of forb seed germination. The natural "wintering over" of fall planted seed helps break down wild seeds' germination inhibitors. Planting time in the upper Midwest is October 15 to November 15. Native grass seed sown earlier than this time may germinate in as soon as 10 days in warm weather and seedlings then may winter kill.

### Frost Seeding

Seed may be hand sown on soil surface during late winter, or early spring (late October to late March) if there is no snow cover. Freezing and thawing mix seed with soil. This method works best with small seed and is effective for adding new species to established areas in the first few years following original seeding. In this case, fall burning before sowing seed will allow greater frost action to occur. Old pocket gopher mounds, bare spots under burned brush piles, and other disturbed areas where bare soil exists are also good sites for frost planting.

### Sowing the seed

When sowing seed by hand it is important to achieve even distribution. Scatter seed slowly and be sure not to run out before completely covering the site. Dividing your planting area and seed mix into smaller sections is helpful. Areas of one acre or less can be marked off in four portions while larger areas can be divided into 10 parts. Small spots missed can be filled in as they show. Hand planting has an advantage over machine planting in that you can have more control over what species are sown in what areas. Most species can be mixed together and sown evenly over the entire site. Grasses may be mixed in different proportions for different areas. Some of the more aggressive forbs and grasses (*Monarda, Solidago, Heliopsis, Helianthus, Ratibida, Rudbeckia, Panicum, or Spartina*) are aesthetically pleasing sown in back edges, patches, or drifts. (*SEEDS, page 4*)





## What is a weed really?

What is a weed? There are almost as many answers as there are weeds, but here are a few for consideration:

A weed is an ugly plant. (Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.)

A weed is a vile, noxious plant that causes allergies (ragweed, poison ivy), pain or scratches (nettles, berry briars, brambles, cat briar, roses, prickly ash), or impedes our travel through an area (tall grass, brambles, dense thickets, tangling vines.)

A weed is a plant that kills other plants by feeding on them (mistletoe, dodder), growing over them (wild grape, Virginia creeper, bittersweet), or harboring diseases that infect other plants (gooseberry, juniper).

A weed is a plant without commercial value.

A weed is any plant growing where you don't want it.

A weed is a wild, uncultivated, or common plant which grows all over the place.

A weed is a plant you don't like or want..

A weed is a plant which decreases the aesthetic or economic value of an area.

Whether a plant is considered a weed depends upon the situation and who is doing the judging. Take, for example, the case of the rare and endangered dwarf white lady slipper, *Cypripedium candidum*, growing in a just plowed and wet, limey, springy cornfield. A farmer would, no doubt, consider the orchid a weed to herbicide. Wildflower enthusiasts would consider the corn to be the weed, and want to protect the fen and delicate plant.

A dictionary definition says a weed is "an introduced plant growing in ground that is or  
(WEEDS, page 8)

## Couple gets media attention for second village mowing

"Americans are so accustomed to pool-table lawns that a patch of native vegetation can be a threat to the established order. In Germantown (Wisconsin), the powers-that-be sent out two police officers and a landscaper to mow down Curtis and Judy Crane's 20-by-120-foot strip of native wildflowers and grasses.

Germantown has got it backward. It's the obsession with the perfectly manicured lawn that's the problem, not wildflowers. Deep-rooted and adapted to drought, most native species require little watering and no mowing; herbicides and fertilizer aren't needed, either. In a world of finite resources, natural lawns ought to be encouraged, not stamped out. They can add beauty and diversity to urban and suburban landscapes." (From the editorial page of *The Milwaukee Journal*, Saturday, August 21, 1993.)

The last newsletter described the Crane's year-long struggle with their village over their native plants on typical subdivision, difficult-to-landscape berm. Neighbors in sympathy with their plight, have been decorating lawns with pink flamingos and spinning plastic flowers and handmade signs with statements such as "Germantown Approved Flowers," "Germantown Nature Zone," and "Landraped by Germantown."

## Community surveys needed for expanding data base

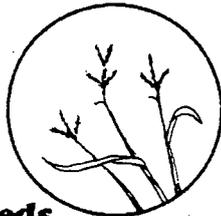
Surveys asking about village, city, school, and other public and private involvement in natural landscaping are available from The Native Plant Preservation Coalition of the Milwaukee Audubon Society and Wild Ones. Information collected will be used to form a clearer picture of current laws and practices throughout Wisconsin. If you can fill out a form for your community, please send a request and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Rae Sweet, 8635 North Fielding Road, Milwaukee, WI 53217.

## Coalition plans February workshop for municipal officials

Attorney Bret Rappaport will speak at a seminar for community leaders concerned with weed ordinances. His topic will be "Lawn Ordinances: Case Studies, Legalities, and Suggested Guidelines for Avoiding Problems". Rappaport is author of a law journal article on the subject. There will also expert presentations on a number of other related topics. Please call 414/351-2291, if you know of an official who should receive an invitation. Space is limited for the event which is planned for Friday, February 11, 1994, preceding the UWM Natural Landscaping Seminar.

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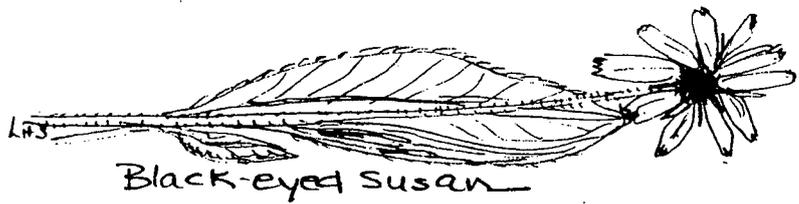


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Black-eyed Susan

(FEDERAL WEED ACT, from page 1)  
for natural ecosystems.

The Natural Resources Defense Council, Weed Science Society of America and state agricultural agencies suggest amending FNWA to: authorize the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to regulate shipments containing seeds of designated noxious weeds; prohibit intentional interstate movement of designated noxious weeds, except under permit; authorize USDA to prohibit entry on emergency basis to foreign species which meet the definition but which are not yet designated; expand the definition to include alien aquatic weed species & alien species threatening "natural biological communities"; allow USDA to help develop control methods for species already widely dispersed; establish a Noxious Weed Advisory Group, with natural area protection experts; establish a petition process to stimulate listing of additional species.

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## Lorrie's Notes . . .

### Low maintenance doesn't mean *no* maintenance

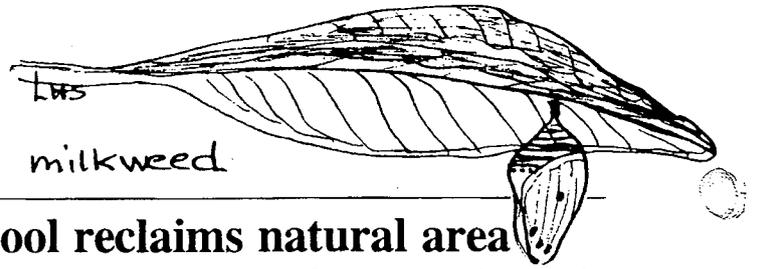
Outdoor environmental classrooms are being seeded and/or transplanted into school yards all over Wisconsin. Molly Murphy, UW-Madison Arboretum landscape architect, reports more than 600 schools have expressed interest. The effort is such a joyful adventure when children are involved in the planning and planting as at Indian Hill School (River Hills, Wisconsin) with its exuberant wildflowers embroidering entrances and bordering classroom courtyard windows.

In the fall of 1990, children and teachers spread sand over lawns and transplanted potted wildflowers and added wild strawberries dug on a school field trip. They mulched each plant as it was placed and settled for winter. So far, so gloriously good! However, what about management in small places with high visibility? We have a tendency to promote natural landscaping as a *no* maintenance solution for schools. The emphasis should be on *low* maintenance and early intervention by an educated employee. Indian Hill School's experience might serve as an example. Very early the first spring, millions, no billions of very green plants emerged that could easily be mistaken for violets. To our horror, the natural areas had erupted with garlic mustard plants, probably brought in a special gift of top soil that had been scattered lightly over sand in some places. (Beware of top soil which may contain exotic weeds!) Devoted volunteer parents and children spent evenings weeding them out, so that by this spring only a few thousand seedlings emerged.

In the meantime, the rest of the project had been neglected. By mid-July this summer, it had become so tousled that it was losing its diversity of colorful flowers. Garlic mustard was gone, but creeping Charlie roofed the strawberries in the woodland and in sunny areas prairie plants were hidden by tall, vigorous stands of old field goldenrods. A tight netting of black medic clover covered the front garden, while yellow melilotus was scattered about the entire yard. Canada thistles were emerging through foundations plantings of clipped, flat-topped shrubs while burdocks were intermingled with quack grass in the utility alleys next to the school walls. A section planted by adults in Spring 1991 using paper and wood chips, had densely matted quack grass threaded among lead plants, prairie dock, and compass plants. Summer workers mowed lawns but avoided clearing out plantain borders growing unmolested into long, seeded heads camouflaged against prairie plantings! Recently, hours of hand-weeding have been needed to maintain the wildflower gardens.

So much the school did was so successful, but one glaring omission was excluding maintenance people from the process. They may be the first to notice blades of quack grass, trailing runners of creeping Charlie, or clumps of Canada goldenrod or yank out medic. Then how simple, easy, and low maintenance management will be. Love of plants, passion for the project can result in eradication of thistles, burdocks, and "messy edges". In time, ability to identify wild seedlings and transplant them to grow with their proper companions will add employee satisfaction as well as the health of the outdoor classroom. Once caretakers understand native plant communities we will have *low* maintenance. - Lorrie Otto

## Monarch pupa on milkweed



(SEEDS, from page 1)

All hand seeding should be followed by a light raking.

If using a mechanical seeder, depth should not be set more than 1/4 inch for forbs or 1/2 inch for most grasses. Following seeding use a tractor or truck to pull a farm drag with teeth adjusted to cut into soil about 2 inches or a use a square piece of chain link fence weighted down with several cement blocks to rake in seeds.

### Cover Crops

Cover crops of oats or winter wheat can be used if the site is subject to erosion. A heavy cover crop can be planted alone before natives are seeded or it can be used to hold soil while slower natives are taking root. Since native seedlings are difficult to identify the first growing season, a cover crop (which is easily identified) is a good "security blanket." If the cover crop has germinated and is growing well, native seeds should also be doing well, even if you can't see them. Missing cover crop shows areas needing reseeding.

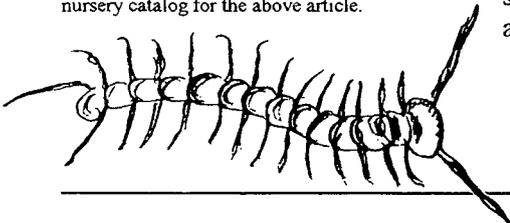
### Other planting tips

A native prairie is a complex natural ecosystem. Attempting to duplicate this environment which has evolved over tens of thousands of years is difficult, if not impossible. But by using care and with nature as a model, a beautiful, natural-looking landscape can be created.

When planting a prairie from seed, patience, and dedication can't be over-emphasized because plantings may tend to look like a weed patch for a few years.

Fall and frost plantings don't need seed bed packing or watering as snow and rain firm the soil and provide moisture before seed germination begins.

We thank Alan Wade of Winona, Minnesota for allowing us to use information from his native plant nursery catalog for the above article.



## Bayside School reclaims natural area

Two new outdoor classrooms have been added to Bayside School's crab-apple meadow. Richard Butt, science teacher at the middle school has planted a prairie and Lorrie Otto has designed and contributed a woodland. Butt has involved his students in digging and transplanting indicator specimens such as silphiums, helianthus, rattlesnake master, stiff goldenrod, and spiderwort. A burr oak tree was added to give the effect of an oak savannah.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources contributed prairie grass

### Group consulting offered

CRM Ecosystems has workshops available covering the seasonal topics of site preparation and identification of warm season grasses and fall flowers.

Limited class size will give participants as much individualized attention and outdoor "hands on" plant experience as possible. Sessions will run approximately two hours and will be held at Prairie Ridge Nursery in Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin.

"Site Preparation" will be held August 28 from 10 a.m. to noon. "Identification of Warm Season Grasses and Fall Flowers" will follow on September 25. Cost is \$20 per session. Call 608/437-5245 for more information.

### Crops hurt as bees disappear

According to an article in *Chicago Tribune*, wild bees have almost vanished in many urban areas. They have become victims of suburbanites who destroy hives, plant bluegrass where wildflowers once grew, and douse their yards with insecticides.

Farmers who need bees to pollinate apple and other crops, have also found that bees are being destroyed by parasitic mites. Scientist are considering altering bee genes as a solution.

seeds which were scattered among the transplants in early June.

The young woodland has an assorted collection of native trees found in stories, songs, and literature for grade school students: an American chestnut, an American beech, a linden, a shagbark hickory, a yellowbud hickory, an ironwood, a musclewood, a blue ash, hackberry, a chinkapin oak (cut in half by a resident rabbit), and a European mulberry (from the childrens' song). As shade develops appropriate flowers will be added, but until then oak and beech leaves are being used as ground cover.

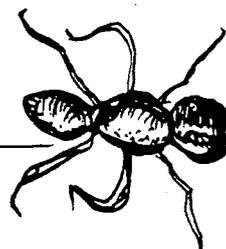
Bayside School's natural area has now doubled since it was listed in Cari Taylor-Carlson's *Milwaukee Walks*.

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## STINGING NETTLE

(Urtica dioica)  
Nettle Family

**Other Names:** Stingers, Greater Nettle, Common Nettle, Net Plant.

**Habitat:** Damp, nutrient-rich soil, waste places, and roadsides.

**Description:** Stinging Nettle is covered with bristly, stinging hairs. It has a four-angled stem and slender, branching, feathery clusters of tiny greenish-white flowers in the leaf axils. The leaves are 2 to 4 in. long, opposite, ovate, with heart-shaped bases, and are coarsely toothed.

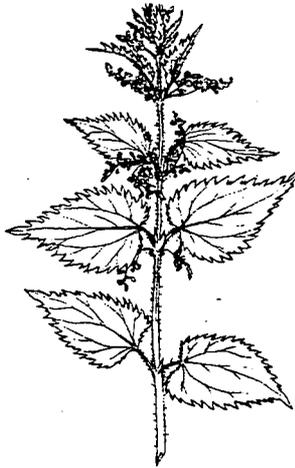
**Height:** 2-4 ft. **Flowering:** June-Sept.

**Comments:** This plant is naturalized from Europe. Since it is not a native species, it is considered a weed and a nuisance. When I finish revealing all its attributes, maybe you will change your mind.

If added to a compost pile, it is said to speed the decay process. A concoction of the roots and leaves makes a natural pesticide against aphids and flea beetles. At one time a linen-like fabric was made from this plant, as well as ropes and fishing nets. It makes a good scalp conditioner, leaving the hair soft and glossy besides stimulating hair growth.

When dried, the plant loses its sting and contains 40% protein, rivaling cottonseed meal as a source of the vital nutrient. Nettle fodder is said to make cows give more milk, and, if powdered and added to their feed, induces chickens to lay more eggs.

**Medicinal Use:** A solution made from the plant was used on burns, nosebleeds, and to halt hemorrhage internally and externally. Doctors during the Civil War recorded how they deliberately cut open and laid bare a major artery of an adult sheep. They then soaked a gauzelike material in a strong cold tea made of Stinging Nettle and applied it directly to the open wound. The bleeding stopped within a matter of minutes. Then they went a step further. They put some blood in the palms of their hands and added a few drops of Nettle juice. Immediately the blood started to coagulate. In England the plant is an accepted wash for "green wounds, old rotten or stinking sores and gangrene."



It has been suggested that Nettle be studied further for possible uses against kidney and urinary system ailments. Recently, Germans have been using the root in treatment for prostate cancer. Russians are using the leaves in alcohol for gall bladder inflammations and hepatitis.

**Name Origin:** The word, Nettle, is derived from net or net plant, which is what it was called because fibers from the plant were used as twine or woven into cloth. The **Genus Name**, Urtica (Ur'ti-ka), refers to the stinging properties of the plant. It is from the Latin word uro which means, "I burn." The **Species Name**, dioica (dy-o'i-ka), is from the Greek word meaning "two households," because male and female flowers occur on different plants.

**Author's Note:** Of all the plants I've researched, Stinging Nettle is the most fascinating and diversely useful. Space does not allow me to report the volumes of material that have been written about the virtues of this plant. If you still consider it a noxious weed and want to destroy it, WAIT! The Red Admiral Butterfly and Milbert's Tortoise Shell caterpillars feed on the foliage, folding the leaves over themselves for shelter.

A stand of Stinging Nettle grows alongside the compost pile near our garden. After learning about the habits of the Red Admiral and Milbert's Tortoise Shell this spring, I began a personal vigil looking for folded leaves of the Nettle. In June I discovered several and curiously peaked inside one leaf. There was a tiny black caterpillar surrounded by fine silky hairs, which helped keep the leaf closed. I placed about five folded leaves in a large glass jar so I could observe and record their progress. Before long I had a caterpillar hanging like a question mark; the formation of the chrysalis followed. It was brownish-gray, splotted with gold — a beautiful little jewel! In nine days a Red Admiral emerged. What a thrill that was for me because up until that moment, I wasn't sure what butterfly would come forth. In five hours I released it to our wildflower meadow.

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## Advantages of a naturalized, native landscape:

Its biodiversity provides food and shelter for insects, birds, and animals.

Its structure provides shade and wind break.

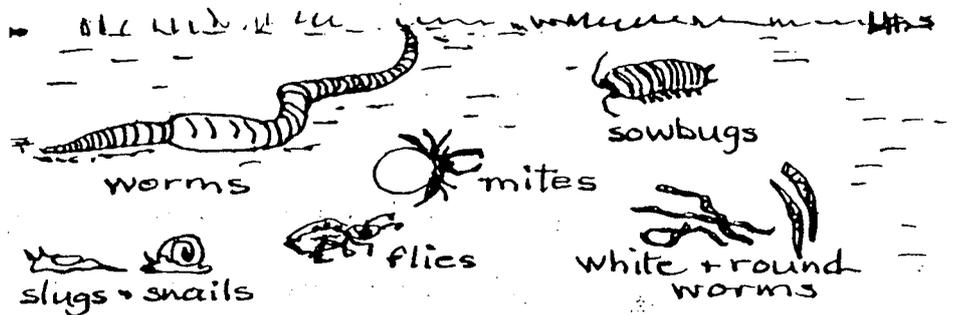
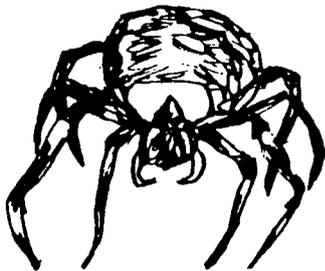
Its ground cover slows rainwater and prevents soil erosion.

Its abundant plant life adds humidity and oxygen to the air.

Its decaying plants recycle nutrients.

Its beauty provides pleasure for people.

- Lucy Schumann



### A fascinating world of micro-organisms lies beneath our feet

"We live on the rooftops of a hidden world. Beneath the soil surface lies a land of fascination, and also of mysteries. . . populated by strange creatures who have found ways to survive in a world without sunlight, an empire whose boundaries are fixed by earthen walls." - Peter Farb, *Living Earth*

Take a close look at a handful of soil. It teems with bacteria, protozoa, fungi, springtales, mites, earthworms, ants, spiders, centipedes, mice, moles, roots, seeds, and insect larvae, etc. in incomprehensible numbers.

Although it may appear that this

many-layered resource is unlimited, the soil that serves as the foundation of our life is vulnerable. It takes time to create. If we interfere with normal processes and allow soil to erode faster than it can replenish itself, we could find ourselves staring at the barren earth. - E E News

## Books of interest . . .

The following titles can be found at Schlitz Audubon Center Bookstore (414/352-2880) or ordered by mail:

*Just Weeds - History, Myths, and Uses* by Pamela Jones (Prentice Hall Press, \$29.95) Thirty common wild plants (many non-natives) are described in fascinating detail and with beautiful colored illustrations.

*Pods - Wildflowers and Weeds in Their Final Beauty* (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$18) A field guide to more than 150 wildflower and weed pods with hundreds of color photos arranged by season. Plant shown growing and dried state.

*1993 Environmental Almanac* compiled by World Resources (Houghlin Mifflin Company, \$10.95) With information on such topics as grassroots activities, ecotourism, wetlands, forests, metro, state, and country profiles, this reference has a wealth of facts which follow up the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit on the Environment.

*Observing Insect Lives* by Donald Stokes (Little, Brown and Company, \$10.95) Excellent guide is divided into seasons with individual chapters on 60 common insects. Text explains where to find each one and what scientists know about behavior. Interesting for beginners.

*Broadsides from the Other Orders - A Book of Bugs* by Sue Hubbell (Random House, \$23) Very readable and filled with the author's personal experiences which enables us to see insects in a fascinating new light. She was a well-known beekeeper, a field which she calls "farming for intellectuals."

*Close Encounters with Insects and Spiders* written and illustrated by James B. Nardi (Iowa State University Press, \$14.95) Written for children with wonderfully detailed insect drawings, this book has a great deal of information for adults as well. Did you know handling can raise a ladybird's blood pressure or make longhorn beetle squeak? Or that there are many insects that dine on nothing but milkweed?

*Botany for All Ages - Discovering Nature Through Activities Using Plants* by Jorie Hunken and The New England Wild Flower Society (The Globe Pequot Press, \$11.95) Interesting and creative activities include using moss or pinecones as rain gauges, finding the age of young pine trees, using plants as historical indicators, and making pH testing solution from red cabbage.

These resources are musts for those starting a school outdoor classroom: *Prairie Restoration for Wisconsin Schools* by Molly Fifield Murray (UW-Madison Arboretum). Written by a landscape architect, this looseleaf notebook is a guide from site analysis to management. Much other useful information. *How Green is Your School?* by Don E. McAllister, PhD (Ocean Voice, Ottawa, Canada) Contains a very useful checklist. Also, there are excellent materials and courses from Project Wild (WREEC, 4014 Chatham Lane, Houston, Texas 77027 713/622-7411)

## Native Wildflowers for Prairies & Meadows



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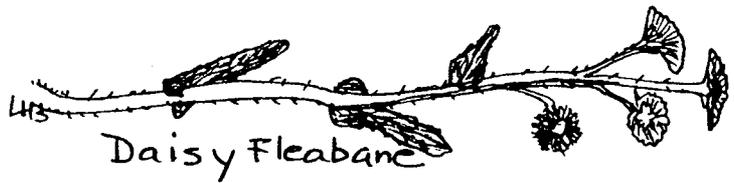


## Dig Designs

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Daisy Fleabane

(WEEDS, from page 2)

has been cultivated usually to the detriment of crops or disfigurement of the place--economically useless plants--plants with an unsightly appearance--plants that tend to grow freely and exclude or retard more valuable plants--plants with exuberant growth and injurious effects--a forb in rangeland."

There's a lot of truth in that. Notice how the definition places weeds in the context of cultivated ground and mentions that they are introduced. It is a fact that most "real" weeds are not native or evolved in our country. They are aliens or immigrants which were brought from Europe and Asia. Although a few were deliberately introduced, most came accidentally, and many in spite of efforts to keep them out.

Native American communities of wild plants like prairies, woodlands, wetlands, and tundras are largely weed-free except to the extent that they have been disturbed. That is, the more they have been abused and disturbed, the more weedy they are. This view of the world of weeds sort of says that all original, native vegetation is natural, and weeds are foreigners, the aliens, - like starlings, house sparrows, Norway rats.

"Detriment, disfigurement, economically useless, unsightly, exclusive, injurious" are all words relating to the opposition of economic endeavors such as farming, ranching, developing, urbanizing (things that use our environment for the sole purpose of making us money). This part of the definition implies that all of nature is weeds. The whole earth is filled with them, trying to resist and fight back against all the "progress of man." What all this means is that before there were people, there were no weeds. Weeds come from man's viewpoint not nature's.

The Bible says weeds are a curse. They were not part of God's original creation which He called good. Weeds came as a part of the fall of man from the pristine condition of caretaker and garden enjoyer to farmer and laborer. Now he must work by the sweat of his brow to eat and "Cursed is the ground for thy

thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field." *Genesis 3:17-18.*

History supports this view. "True" weeds evolved with man and his agricultural and soil-disturbance activities. They followed him from the cradle of civilization and spread with him as he covered the earth. Hunters, gatherers, and primitive farmers punching holes for a few corn kernels had no weeds to contend with. Plowers and tillers, earth movers, and mound builders had weeds all over the place.

Originally the land was covered with native plants specifically adapted to conditions of their environment. They competed for necessities which were in limited supply, like sunlight in the forest or water in the desert. They evolved by working out methods best suited to their needs.

In every ecosystem there were a few plants unsuited to compete with the convergently-evolved masses. Instead they chose a line of evolution which helped them gain a jump on everybody else by getting there first with the most. In floodplains, on wind blowouts, newly turned up mounds, or hollows where trees fell over, after landslides, floods, or fires, in buffalo wallows, on gopher mounds, there were always a few species that could jump in and grow right away. They had evolved more rapid means of reproducing and growing in order to take advantage of these less-frequently occurring disturbances.

For the most part these early successional plants were annuals whose short life cycle allowed them to evolve rapidly. They were fast growers and prolific seeders whose seeds often remained dormant, though viable, for hundreds of years, waiting for a disturbance to trigger their germination. Many were sensitive to a quick flash of light (hence the old farmer's tale about plowing during the dark of the moon). They were "pioneer" or "bandaid" plants that came in to cover bare soil or breaks

in plant cover.

In the United States, ragweed is such a plant. There are several species, each adapted to slightly different forms of disturbance. On moist floodplains, giant ragweed would cover new soil, helping to prevent erosion, while slower, long-lived perennials began to grow. In bison wallows, other smaller ragweed did the same thing. After a forest fire, fireweed, quaking aspen, and certain species of pines would begin to grow that first year. These are all opportunistic plants capable of taking advantage if given a chance.

In nature, disturbances are usually small if they are frequent. Larger, more catastrophic disturbances, like the Yellowstone fire of 1988, occur only every century or so; therefore, evolution in natural settings is relatively slow. Giving these types of plants a

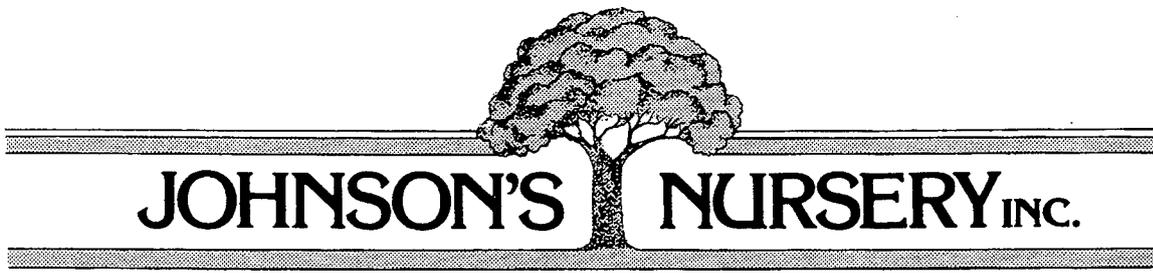
(WEEDS, page 10)

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### Native Wisconsin Plants Available for Purchase

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Red Maple - *s*  
Silver Maple  
Sugar Maple  
Black Maple - *p*  
Alleghany Serviceberry - *p*  
Yellow Birch - *s*  
Paper Birch  
River Birch  
Musclewood - *p*  
Bitternut Hickory - *p, s*  
Shagbark Hickory - *p*  
Common Hackberry - *p*  
Pagoda Dogwood  
Downy Hawthorn  
Dotted Hawthorn



White Ash  
Black Ash  
Green Ash  
Blue Ash - *p*  
Thornless Common Honeylocust  
Kentucky Coffeetree - *s*  
Butternut  
Black Walnut  
Ironwood - *p*  
Quaking Aspen

Black Cherry - *s*  
Chokecherry - *s*  
Waferash  
White Oak - *s*  
Swamp White Oak - *s*  
Bur Oak  
Red Oak - *s*  
American Linden



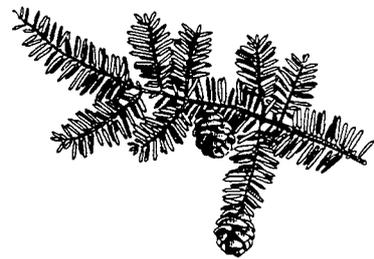
#### Shrubs:

Running Serviceberry - *s*  
Black Chockberry - *p*  
Silky Dogwood  
Gray Dogwood  
Redosier Dogwood  
American Filbert  
Dwarf Bushhoneysuckle  
Eastern Wahoo  
Common Witchhazel - *p*  
Kalm St. Johnswort  
Common Winterberry  
Common Ninebark  
Potentilla  
American Plum  
Fragrant Sumac  
Staghorn Sumac  
Prairie Rose  
Pussy Willow

American Elder  
Common Snowberry  
Indianturrent Coralberry - *s*  
Witherod Viburnum - *p*  
Nannyberry Viburnum - *p*  
Blackhaw Viburnum - *p*  
Am. Cranberrybush Viburnum- *p*

#### Evergreens:

Balsam Fir  
Oldfield Common Juniper - *p*  
Creeping Juniper  
Eastern Redcedar  
White Spruce  
White Pine  
American Arborvitae  
Canada Hemlock



*p* - Also available in small potted plants from our Propagation Dept. upon request.

*s* - Not currently available this season, must be ordered prior to April 1 to be assured a spring dug plant.

W.180 N.6275 Marcy Road, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051 (414)252-4988  
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(WEEDS, from page 8)

chance to hasten their evolution through one human-caused disturbance after another, turned them into the aggressive weeds we have today. This happened in Asia and Europe where farming methods were evolving and improving. For thousands of years, humans, agriculture, and weeds grew together. In fact, some weeds are so like the crops they grow beside that their seeds cannot be separated by size, shape, weight, or time of maturation. Few native American weed species are problems to the gardener or farmer; they have just not had sufficient time to evolve as the old world weeds have.

Some wonderful adaptations that weeds have come up with include making multitudes of seeds, having seeds live for centuries before germinating, having high germination rates, growing rapidly to overtop competing vegetation, or spreading flat to prevent growth of other plants, having extremely efficient methods of spreading seeds, and even having the ability to produce seed without pollination or fertilization. Just think how all cut off dandelion flowers turn to seeds on your lawn after you mow. Many weeds also spread by stolens or rhizomes, so cutting or chopping these parts only serves to make more of them. It seems with weeds, you just can't win!

Not only are they persistent, they are omnipresent. Where ever people go, they follow. You want to find weeds, where do you go? Out to a virgin prairie or bog? Of course not! You go to a farmer's field, your garden or lawn, the very place where you are trying the hardest to get rid of them. That's where you'll find them, busily adapting to a new hoe or herbicide, going about their burgeoning way evolving new strategies to cope with our new ways of trying to eliminate them. If we ever do set up housekeeping on the Moon or Mars, you can bet, the first plant to grow will be a weed! - Pat Armstrong

Pat' native landscaping is featured in the September 1993 issue of *Country Living*.

### Wildcare . . .

**September:** FALL TRANS-PLANTING is best for trillium, may-apple, shooting star, etc. For others, fall may be preferable because of less weed competition, cooler temperatures, and more rain. Consult Rock's *Prairie Propagation Handbook* & Sperka's *Growing Wildflowers* for tips. If you've expanded a woodland this year, add appropriate groundlayer species now.

**UPDATE** your yard's plant-community records before leaves fall. Note young plants' progress, and determine counter-measures for aggressives ones. **MARK** ferns & others known to emerge late in spring.

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS** don't all have natural areas...yet. Your natural yard could set the scene for an art or science lesson--maybe start some thoughts to start a school prairie.

**BIRD-DOG** ragweed locations. As summer progressed, mowed-off ragweed plants formed flowers & seedheads close to the ground. Gravel shoulders between pavement & traditional lawns are a prime spot for this determined-to-survive hayfever agent.

**SEED-COLLECTING DATES:** See *The Outside Story*, (Sept - Oct 1992)

**October:** **EXTEND** the beauty of your native yard by collecting & drying stalks for winter enjoyment. Jane Embertson's 1979 book, *Pods: Wildflowers and Weeds in Their Final Beauty*, gives collecting times & techniques. Colleen Weiler, who did many of the arrangements in its color photos, gives workshop classes in our area.

**"BUT OUR KIDS NEED A LAWN"**... Have you worked out any provisions for play and sports in your prairie/woodland? Can you relocate any prairie paths? Cross & reconnect them--kids love mazes. Is there space in a clearing for frisbee and hacky sack? Develop your own version of prairie croquet or bocce ball. What about an exercise path through the woods?

**QUESTION:** "Condo" conjures images of chemically-controlled lawns and clipped shrubs. Do you know any naturally landscaped ones? Just curious. . .

**WILDERNESS UNIVERSITY**, a free Wednesday evening series, starts September 15 at UW-Waukesha. Dan Boehlke's woodland program is the grand finale. Call 521-5445 for details.

**"DO NOT BUY** any cultivar of loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). No matter what nurserymen claim, even loosestrife said to be sterile will cross with that growing in the wild and produce an invasive hybrid. Loosestrife, an exotic, destroys wetlands and has no value to wildlife." - Faith Campbell, Natural Resources Defense Council

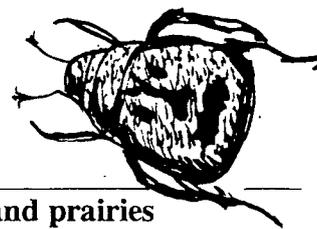
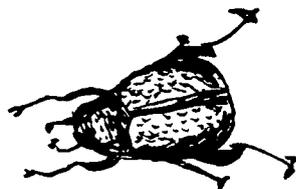
**A BIG THANKS** to the DNR's Michelle Anderson, Judy Crane who kept us on track, and all who helped with the State Fair project--wasn't it all worth it? *Liatris* planted few years ago bloomed and complemented newly added cup-plant and purple coneflowers. Great interest in our plants and Aldo Leopold bench. We'll run the newly revised plans. - Barb Glassel

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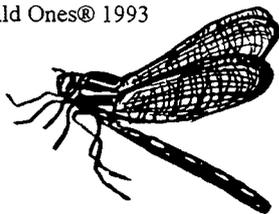


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*Wild Ones - Natural Landscapers, Ltd. is a non-profit organization with a mission to educate and share information with members and community at the "plants-roots" level and to promote bio-diversity and environmentally sound practices. We are a diverse membership interested in natural landscaping using native species in developing plant communities.*

*The Outside Story* is published bimonthly by Wild Ones - Natural Landscapers, Ltd. Material for newsletters is welcomed and should be submitted eight weeks prior to publication to: Carol Chew, 8920 North Lake Drive, Bayside, WI 53217. Send change of address to: Mandy Ploch, 4108 West Mequon Road, Mequon, WI 53092. Advertising Managers: Melissa Cook, 6838 North Range Line Road, Glendale, WI 53209 and Judy Crane, N97 W16981 Cheyenne Court, Germantown, WI 53022 Distribution Coordinator: Delene Hansen, Artwork: Lucy Schumann

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## Green Bay group visits member yards and prairies

Green Bay members visited two yards in June. Some of the existing plants in Kathy Meyer's woodland are sedge, star flower, and lowbush blueberry. A few landscaping ideas were: identifying and transplanting sedge; adding middle story trees (cockspur hawthorn, or American hop hornbeam); and considering the resulting light change caused by any tree removal.

Brock Robinson recommends beginning with a plan. After his lawn was destroyed, leaf mold and shredded bark were used on the area. Many plants in his woodland were rescued in the dormant stage. Advantages of this method are: durability of root stock, chance to delay planting, and larger numbers of plants which may be carried in a smaller space. Blooming shooting stars seen in the visit were especially beautiful.

## Gentian, prairie seed expert shares knowledge

Babette Kis is a very patient plant propagator whose Milwaukee yard was the site of our August meeting. All of her wildflowers are started from seed, something that she has been studying and doing since she was nine years old. Although gentians are her forte, she has produced purple coneflowers, blue baptisia and thimbleweed for Milwaukee boulevard plantings. Retzer Nature Center consists primarily of plants from Babette with Barnes Prairie origins. One in particular, butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) has adapted to heavy, loam soils unlike the familiar one which comes from sandy soils. She said seedlings are much more tolerant of growing conditions than mature plants so it is important to understand what pH balance mature plants require. A plant is growing in the right place if it has lived there for at least 10 years.

However, pH can change from year to year and spring to fall. Barnes' Prairie, she noted, has changed from 3.5 to 6.5 - 7.0 in the past 20 years, probably from acid rain.

Prairie gentians require 5.0 - 5.5 pH

Gary Fewless was the guide though the UWGB prairie. Some "friendly" plants seen were bush clover, lead plant, pale purple coneflower, big bluestem, and Indian grass. Sweet clover, is a bi-annual requiring removal (such as burning) two years in succession. Gary suggests giving consideration to planting a partial area when starting. As one area is established, seeds can be collected for the next section. Prairies change over seasons, so visit several times.

In August, the group saw Kit Woessner's suburban front yard planted in prairie and a developing woodlands in back. Jim Jerzak described his three year prairie restoration project as members toured his acreage.

Join the Purple Loosestrife Task Force by calling UW - Extension (391-4610). - Sue Barrie

and need to grow with other plants. Bottle gentian likes a pH of 4.0 - 7.5 while creamy gentian is more tolerant. Asters and goldenrods are good companion plants. Provide at least a foot of humus for gentians.

Collect seeds just before dispersal and store until fall. Some seeds can then be planted safely, but wait until after beetles and birds are gone so they won't harvest them. Blue baptisia seeds can be cleaned, stored dry and cold until March planting. Legumes planted in sterile soil will need an inoculant, but not if planted outside in garden soil where bacteria is available. When transplanting, don't wash away soil containing valuable microorganisms. Seedlings can be potted up to five years. Solomon's seal develops a root the first year and takes four to five years to bloom; trilliums need five to seven; and butterfly weed three. Starry Solomon's seal and goldenseal won't germinate for two years or grow under black walnuts. Add oak or beech leaves, pfitzer or yew needles to lower pH, add lime to increase pH. - Jan Koel

## Calendar

Schlitz Audubon Center and Wehr Nature Center Chapters: *(Note that the same program is given at Schlitz Audubon Center, 1111 East Brown Deer Road, Milwaukee, WI 53217 at 9:30 a.m. and Wehr Nature Center, 9701 West College Avenue, Franklin, WI 53132 at 1:30 p.m.)*

Saturday, September 11: We'll be seeing Noor Morey's Mequon yard.

Saturday, October 9: Seed collecting.

Saturday, November 13: Lucy Schumann describes how she developed a charming, woodland garden.

Saturday, December 11: Janice Stiefel gives us plant and insect lore at our annual holiday meeting seed exchange.

Saturday, January 8: School natural area maintenance is Lorrie Otto's topic.

### Green Bay Chapter:

Saturday, September 25 at 9 a.m.  
We'll be gathering seeds this time.

Wednesday, November 10 at 7 p.m.  
Business meeting and seed exchange.  
Call 414/826-7520 for information.

### Northern Illinois Chapter:

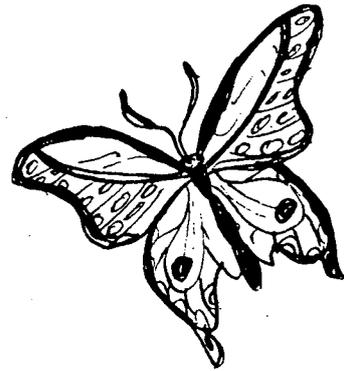
Sunday, September 12 at 2 p.m. Jan Smith will show her small flower-filled yard and we'll visit two gardens she's designed. Call 708/653-3958.

Thursday, September 16 at 7 p.m.  
Karen Moore will demonstrate how to dry fruits and flowers for crafts and potpourri. First fall meeting at COD, Building SRC, Room 1024A. For information call 708/983-8404.

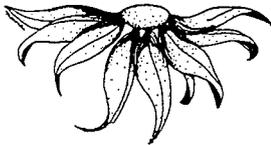
Saturday, October 16 at 1 p.m. Virginia Umberger will talk about growing and using gourds. Call 708/742-0355.

Thursday, October 21 at 7 p.m. Dr. George Ware, Dendrologist at Morton Arboretum, will tell us about caring for trees. Meeting at COD. Call 708/983-8404 for information.

Thursday, November 18 at 7 p.m.  
Annual holiday party and seed exchange. The -----Players will be back by popular demand. Food, fellowship, and fun. Call 708/887-0541 for more details about bringing seeds and food. If you don't have seeds you'll be able to buy them for 10 cents a package.



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## The Outside Story

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