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A VOICE FOR THE NATURAL LANDSCAPING MOVEMENT

# Wild Ones®

## Journal

### OUR NATIVE LANDSCAPES

On a trip through Missouri one beautiful May day, I saw the White Oak with its golden tassels silhouetted against the blue sky of Missouri. I want to remember Missouri in that way. The White Oak had been left on the steep hillsides and hilltops, and it greeted those who saw and understood the beauty of these hills. Soft gray branches against a wintry sky, rose and silver

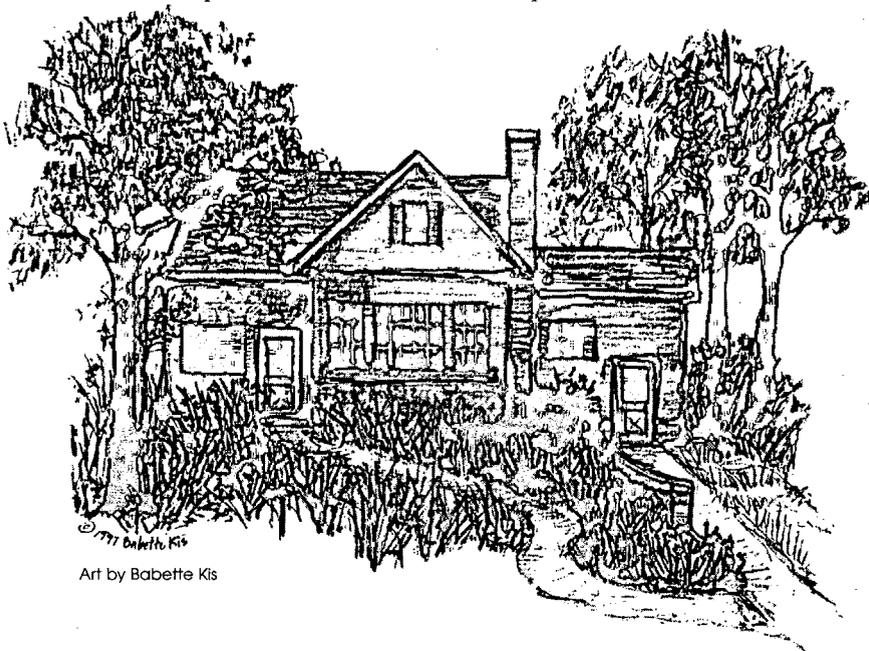
buds in May, a rich foliage in summer with a strong character—this is my vision of the White Oak.

Down in New England, the American Elm tree with its feeling of shelter and protection and its homelike expression

seems to dominate in forming something that is typical New England.

Evidently the pioneers considered the elm trees more fitting for their home and village sites than any other tree. In the elm there is a domestic feeling that perhaps no

other tree possesses. Out here on the plains, it is associated with level, moist country. You will find it in bloom mixed with Yellow Birch in the bottom lands of the northern part of the Mississippi River. And on the plains the Cottonwood is a sturdy chap. The storms seem to have no effect on his many-branched head. But plant him where moisture is scarce and his freedom curtailed and watch what happens. His arms become torn and broken by the wind.  
*(continued on next page)*



Art by Babette Kis

By Jens Jensen

(continued from page 1)

The reddish-brown catkins of the male Cottonwood swaying in the spring breeze is an unforgettable sight. And what a delight on a cloudy autumn or winter day when the sun breaks through the clouds and its soft rays strike the Cottonwood's silvery gray head! It then illuminates the surrounding country as if it were there to give life to an otherwise dark winter landscape.

When you see the White Birch you know you are in the north. The Canoe (White) Birch is really the poet of our northern woods. No other tree speaks so beautifully as the birch in full moonlight.

A group of birch trees placed outside a window, so that they receive the full light of the moon, will lighten up a room in the most startling manner.

The north brings us not only the birch but also the aspen. In groups upon the woodland border, it gives the landscape a decided musical note. One can almost see the woodland nymphs dancing to the notes of the violin. There is always a feeling of spring in the aspen, and (together) with the Gray Dogwood in the lowlands, they sing of spring when winter is still in the air.

As the oak is the dominant tree of Illinois, so the (American) Beech represents the remnants of what once was a great forest over a large part of Indiana. A beech forest is a noble thing with its straight silvery gray trunks terminating in a head of fine lacy branches. The beech, too, seems to be tolerant of its neighbors and smaller friends, as shown by the rich flora that grow on the floor of our beech woods. What a loss it will be to the landscape of Indiana, where the beech reigns supreme, when the last beech woodlot has been destroyed. I wonder—will the Hoosier state then create as many poets as it has heretofore?

Down in central Illinois the Honey Locust is at home, and in some sections is known as "The Farmer Wife's Tree." This name has been given it because it was the farmer's wife who went into the wooded areas along the prairie rivers for the locust saplings. She felt more of a kinship for the locust than for other trees. There is a certain refinement about this tree, and its golden-yellow autumn color gives a soft light to the landscape.

Evergreens are at home in rocky or sandy land. They express something the

deciduous plants can never do so well. White Pine on a rocky cliff gives an expression of height and adventure. The Red Cedar, which turns a lovely brown during winter and blends beautifully into the browns and grays of our deciduous woodlands, belongs with these woodlands, just as the Dwarf Juniper belongs on our prairie river bluffs.

The motives and compositions in our native woodlands, our hills, our valleys, our river bluffs and our swamps, our cold and rugged north and our sunny south are unlimited. Such wealth and such refinement speak well for the art of landscaping in our country.

—Jens Jensen

Excerpted from *Siftings*, 1939

*Editor's note: Jens Jensen (Yens Yen-SEN), a nature-loving Dane, was one of the earliest and most influential champions of native landscaping in America. Jensen sought to express the spirit of the American landscape by placing native trees, shrubs, vines and wildflowers in the kind of places and associations that they were found growing in the wild.*

## NATIVE PLANTS THAT RABBITS DON'T LIKE

Eastern Cottontail Rabbits seem to like the taste of many of our native plants. Here are a few plants that they seldom eat.

### Prairie Plants

*Cornus racemosa* Gray Dogwood, *Smilacena stellata* Starry False Solomon's Seal, *Allium cernuum* Wild Onion, *Allium canadense* Wild Garlic, *Monarda fistulosa* Wild Bergamot, *Pycnanthemum virginianum* Mountain Mint, *Asclepias syriaca* Common Milkweed, *Euphorbia corollata* Flowering Spurge, *Geum triflorum* Prairie Smoke, *Asclepias verticillata*

Whorled Milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*  
Swamp Milkweed, *Anemone cylindrica*  
Thimbleweed, *Anemone canadensis*  
Canada Anemone, *Ranunculus* species  
Buttercup.

### Deciduous Woodland Plants

*Allium triocum* Wild Leek, *Polygonatum* species Solomon's Seal, *Smilacena racemosa* Racemose False Solomon's Seal, *Arisaema triphyllum* Jack-in-the-pulpit, *Aquilegia canadensis* Wild Columbine, *Dicentra cucullaria* Dutchman's Breeches.

Summarized from *Field Observations made at Racine County prairies and woodlands by Babette Kis, 1972 to 1997. Jerry Schwartzmeier, Retzer Nature Center; Riveredge Nature Center; and Mariette Nowak, Wehr Nature Center, contributed to this article.*

— Copyright 1997 Babette Kis

Readers: Do you have other plants rabbits avoid? How about deer? Let us hear from you.



Eastern Cottontail Rabbit

## SEEDS FOR EDUCATION

The **Seeds for Education Program** received fifteen applications representing a wide range of outdoor classroom projects. Although each of the projects was deserving of praise and support, unfortunately we had limited funds. **The 1997 Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Awards are as follows:**

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. Janet Berry School, Appleton, WI              | 200.00 |
| 2. Liberty Prairie Conservancy, Libertyville, IL | 150.00 |
| 3. Blossom Home Preschool, Ann Arbor, MI         | 100.00 |
| 4. Lincoln School, De Pere, WI                   | 100.00 |
| 5. Wequiock School, Green Bay, WI                | 100.00 |
| 6. McAuliffe School, Green Bay, WI               | 100.00 |

The first- and second-place recipients are eligible to participate in a Plant-Grant Program through the **Seeds for Education Partners**, sponsoring nurseries which allow a discount for their plant and seed purchases.

Wild Ones has initiated a classroom membership for an annual cost of \$10, one-half the cost of a regular membership. Each school is invited to join Wild Ones to receive the Wild Ones Handbook, a 30-page primer on natural landscaping, and the bimonthly Wild Ones Journal. William O. Douglas, attorney and staunch defender of the environment, wrote: Every school needs a nature trail and every person—adult or young—needs a bit of wilderness if wonder, reverence and awe are to be cultivated.

It is with this idea that Wild Ones Board of Directors created the **Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Fund**. Lorrie's life work with students of all ages has been to cultivate wonder, reverence and awe for Nature and all of her creatures. ☘

—Bret Rappaport



Milkweed  
Pods &  
Seeds

## IN PRAISE OF THE SOD CUTTER

The lawn mower, snow blower, weed wacker and leaf blower are the bane of my existence, filling the four seasons with ear-shattering racket. However, I have found, despite my blanket condemnation, one such contraption that I heartily recommend to natural landscapers—the sod cutter.

Our neighbors, Scott and Patty Glicksberg, live on a two-acre lot dotted with blue spruce and fir trees, some birch, a large field and an over-abundance of grass. Solid proponents of natural landscaping, they set out to return the land to Nature. Patty attended conferences and read books.

Last fall they gathered seed from my yard and a nearby field and planted it. In March, the seedlings of Coneflower, Spiderwort and other native wildflowers were several inches tall. Not shying away from proclaiming their devotion to the natural landscape movement, Patty and Scott decided to make their front yard a meadow. The only problem was that the front yard was a 100 foot by 50 foot berm of grass, which Patty affectionately referred to as “the grave.”

What to do?

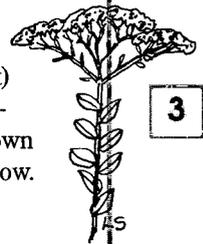
Kill the lawn with herbicide? This was not a preferred option. Cover it with plastic? That would take too much plastic and it might take too long. Cover it with mulch? Again, this might take too long. Dig up the lawn by hand? A back breaker. The solution? A sod cutter.

For \$53 for three hours' use, the sod cutter took up almost 1000 square feet of grass, cleanly and totally. No fuss, no muss. Now, the machine was heavy and loud. It took two of us, Scott and me, to do the job. But the results are amazing. You'll be able to see for yourself, if you attend the field trip to my house in July, because the Glicksbergs are right next door. ☘

—Bret Rappaport.

## ANNUAL WILD ONES MEETING SATURDAY, AUGUST 9

All members are invited to attend the annual meeting at Wehr Nature Center, 9701 W. College Avenue, Franklin WI. Welcome will be from 9-10 AM. The general meeting (election of national officers, policy discussion, chapter input) will be held from 10 AM-noon. Musical entertainment will be provided at lunchtime (bring your own lunch). Guided prairie and wetland tours will follow.



*To Jens Jensen, the greatest compliment was that a landscape of his "must have always looked this way."*

In recognition of their natural landscaping efforts in general and their support of Wild Ones in particular, the following people have been selected to serve as honorary directors:

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Sara Stein              | Author, New York   |
| Darrell Morrison, FASLA | Landscape Architect, Georgia                                     |
| Andy & Sally Wasowski   | Authors, New Mexico  |
| Craig Tufts             | Chief naturalist, National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C. |

They have all expressed appreciation of the recognition and honor and we look forward to their input and support.

# Remembering Mel Ellis

*A note from Donna VanBuecken unreeled from my fax machine: "This article was given to me by one of our members," Donna wrote, "Neither the member nor I know who Mel Ellis is. She received a blurred copy from a friend and retyped it at some point in time many, many years ago. If you can use it, please do." I smiled.*

*Yes, I know of Mel Ellis. In my youth I sought only two items from the Milwaukee Sunday Journal—the comics and Mel's nature column. When I moved to Big Bend, WI, in 1978, I would cruise by his long driveway and try to picture "Little Lakes," as Mel called his home, made private by countless numbers of trees.*

*I should have written a fan letter to him then to earn the chance to shake his hand before his passing in 1984. I understand he was very good about responding to fan mail. It is, in fact, how he came to fall in love with his wife, Gwen, whom I have the pleasure to know.*

*You are invited to meet or become reacquainted with Mel Ellis with his essay, "The Delicate Balance."*

—Joy Buslaff

## THE DELICATE BALANCE

When the apple trees became old and produced little fruit, I cut them and lost two pairs of Wrens, a Downy Woodpecker couple and one swarm of bees which regularly came for nectar which they magically made into honey to fill their combs in the hollow of a neighboring Hickory.

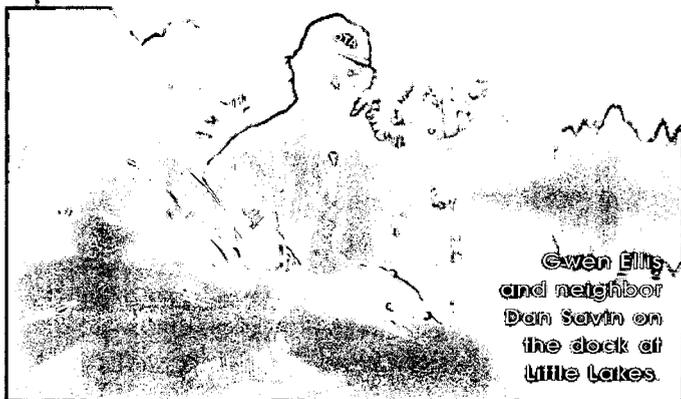
When a Weeping Willow deigned to annually clutter one of my ponds with leaves and broken branches, I put the saw to it, sprinkled copper sulphate on the stump to inhibit any resurrection it might have planned, and lost a Mink which each spring raised her young back among the roots which formed a comfortable nursery.

When I ditched a marsh to drain it dry enough for an onion and carrot crop, I lost three pairs of Redwinged Blackbirds, one Gallinule couple, two domed rush huts which housed Muskrats, some undeterminable number of dragonflies, a spawning area for Northern Pike, as many mosquito larvae as might feed a sizable school of minnows ... not to mention the (Marsh) Marigolds, which in spring goldplated the dead, brown grass of every winter.

When I cruised with a pruner through the several spruce groves, cutting out all dead branches sometimes to heights above my head, I destroyed the insect pantry which was feeding at least three pairs of Chickadees and one Nut-hatch couple, and I opened up aisles down which the winter wind could come to drive from their camps such birds as sought nightly sanctuary there.

When I touched a match to four brushpiles which had accumulated over the years, I put six cottontails to route, one of which was subsequently run down by a dog, while the others moved to safer, more distant places.

When I maneuvered a tractor with whirling blades to cut out for myself a green lawn, status symbol of this suburban generation, I lost countless purple, yellow and white violets; spring scarfs of pale pink and white anemones; high-headed purple thistles where wild, yellow canaries perched and fed; Skunk Cabbage which



Gwen Ellis  
and neighbor  
Dan Savin on  
the dock at  
Little Lakes.

*Mel wrote of Gwen: "Who would lug a 20-pound rock a half-mile out of a neighbor's pasture so she might have it by the back door, where she can view its convolutions and colors every time she goes into or out of the house? ... Well, Gwen would, and if you had the energy to follow her, you would see her stop to examine the intricate, lace-like flower of the crawling Wild Cucumber, or run a loving finger over the velvet of a shelf fungus on some old stump. Gwen, a woman of some stern disciplines, melts at the sight of an aged piece of wood into which the carpenter ants have tunneled intricate designs ... I do not suppose a flower blooms out here that she does not know about."*

*"It is a place of small successes and some monumental failures. It is a place of sweat and calluses, some profanities, some accidents and sometimes so much love it overflows in tears."—Mel Ellis, Little Lakes*

came purple-streaked from yet frozen ground to unfurl green sheaths to the sun ... a galaxy of plants ... all for the monotonous sweep of green grass.

When I became too lazy to carry water to the two horses which live out behind our house, I extended their fence so they could come to one of the ponds and help themselves. So now the bank, once held in place by grass, has been grazed bare and the rains keep stealing and stealing earth from the slope to silt the pond.

When the Dutch Elm tree disease attacked, though there was no hope, even in cutting them, of containing the epidemic, I felled the trees anyway, and one Raccoon family left, the flicker population was cut in half, all Redheaded Woodpeckers departed, and our Oriole population dropped from three pairs to one.

Then, though I already had three spring-fed ponds (more than enough for any family to fish and swim in), I dug a fourth, then the water backed over an oasis which had a token population of rare Lady Slippers, and now I know there will never be any here ever again, and the higher water level invaded the roots of a colony of Pitcher Plants (rare insect-eating flowers), and now there is a chance we will even lose these.

Not satisfied, I opted for paths through the wild tangle to harvest berries, and I cut by at least one quarter the natural food supply of Elderberries, Highbush Cranberry, Mulberries ... a multitude of bushes and low trees which carry dried fruit right into the winter season of those birds which do not choose to migrate.

Then I sprayed the carpet of algae, which sometimes coats the pool, with a poison calculated to route the green scum, and then, even if it looked all shiny and beautiful, the life chain which travels the fertile route from nigh invisible animals and plants to fish and even to our table, was interrupted.

And if visitors remarked on how beautiful it looked, I could not bring myself to tell them that true beauty goes beyond the sparkling surface into the shadowy places where most pond life has its inception.

Then if I did some good things like bringing in wildflowers from places where the concrete of new freeways was making its thrust, or planted 1,000 white cedars in some springtime, or rooted Wild Grape and Bittersweet along a wooden rail fence or built baffles of stone so the creek cur-

rent might gouge holes for a trout to hide in ... many things really ... I did them with an impertinence which ignored a wisdom which has kept the world in delicate balance since before man.

And this is the egocentricity of man, a trait which only man, of all the animals, is heir to and it is this egocentricity for which he may some day be made to pay forfeit.

So now, if confession is good for the soul, I should feel better. And if being a man includes the ability to profit by one's mistakes, I should do better in the future.

Though I'm afraid that, when the time comes, and lightning perhaps rends a tree, I will not leave the leaning hulk so it may be tunneled to become a high-rise apartment for many wildings, but bringing the saw instead, I am afraid I will cut it because it offends my sense of proportion standing there, a cripple of a tree, among those other so perfect, so self-righteous trees! ☹

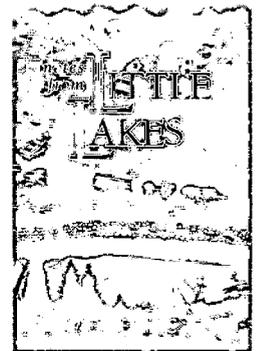
—Mel Ellis

*Besides his popular columns, Mel published a number of books during his lifetime. But it might be the newly published collection of essays, under the title of Notes from Little Lakes, that will speak most strongly to our Wild Ones hearts. It chronicles his family's life on 15 acres of pastureland that they turned into a wildlife haven. Warm and easy to read, it includes short observations of daily life, essays about the land, the seasons and parenthood.*

*A sample passage: "Many have looked at Little Lakes, but few have seen it. For some, the trees might as well be wearing dollar bills instead of leaves, since they cannot think except in terms of cash value ... others see a park ... fishermen see the fish ... swimmers see the swimming place ... flower lovers see the flowers and bird lovers see the birds.*

*"Then sometimes comes one who sees it all, and appreciates the struggle nature is making to reclaim a small portion of what man has deprived her of."*

*Published by The Cabin Bookshelf, Notes from Little Lakes (\$23.95) is available in Wisconsin bookstores or can be ordered from the publisher at 1234 Hickory Drive, Waukesha, WI 53186. For phone orders, call toll-free, 1-888-40-CABIN.*



## FIELD PUSSYTOES

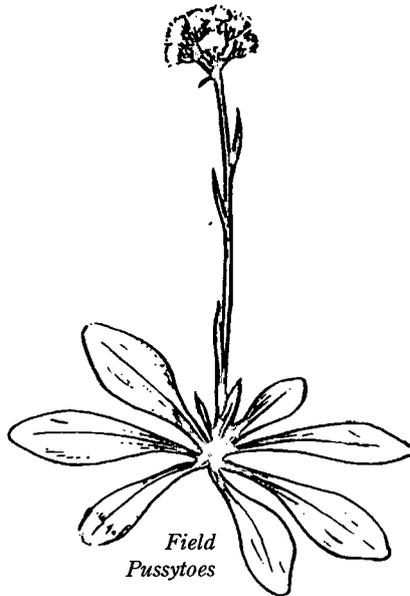
(*Antennaria neglecta*)

**Family:** Compositae (Composite)

**Other Names:** Smaller Pussytoes, Everlasting, Mouse Ear, Ladies' Tobacco, Field Cat's-foot.

**Habitat:** Dry fields, pastures, plains, open slopes or woods.

**Description:** Pussytoes are low-growing plants with a slender, erect, woolly stem bearing terminal clusters of fuzzy white, 1/4 in. flower heads. They are all disk flowers enclosed with greenish or brownish bracts with white tips. The leaves are basal, arranged in a rosette. They are 1 to 2 in. long, woolly-white, single-veined, spoon-shaped with upturned tips ending in an abrupt point.



resemble the antennae of certain insects. Species Name, *neglecta* (neg-LEK-ta), means "overlooked." Anyone who has ever held a kitten and felt its tiny paws will know immediately where the Common Name comes from. The flowers really do look like a kitten's paw, dainty and so soft.

**Author's Note:** One beautiful Saturday morning in June of 1994, my husband and I discovered the importance of this plant to one certain butterfly.

We were walking through the prairie at Riversite Park near Hingham, Wisconsin with Mike DuMez, the director. We came upon a huge patch of Pussytoes and ordinarily would have walked

right through them. Except, I remembered that several days prior I had found two larvae of the American Painted Lady Butterfly on our own section of Pussytoes at home. Before we took another step, I suggested we take a closer look at this patch for evidence of caterpillars. With a more in-depth inspection, we discovered that there were, literally, hundreds of the beautiful American Painted Lady caterpillars eating the Pussytoes. If we, or someone else, had walked or ran through this patch, they would have been destroyed and no one would have ever known. They didn't bark or meow, they had no defensive mechanism to let us know they were there. When you come across this plant, don't forget to STOP and LOOK!



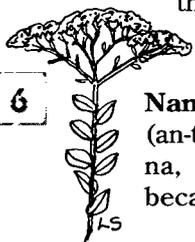
We must all learn to "walk gently upon the earth" and take notice of the small creatures that are occupying and using the same space we are.

**Height:** 6-18 in.

**Flowering:** May to July

**Comments:** Pussytoes are a perennial native. They are usually found growing in clumps with sparse vegetation nearby. The plants puts out a growth inhibitor, which assures each Pussytoe plant an adequate supply of moisture and nutrients. Desert plants often exhibit this growth pattern because they have to compete for nutrients.

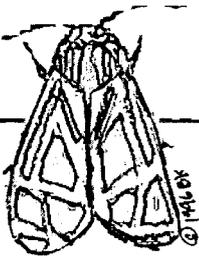
**Medicinal Use:** Old country folks made a shampoo of the flower heads to get rid of lice; and to keep away moths, they packed them away with their winter clothes. Over the years, this plant has been used to treat diarrhea, dysentery, bruises, sprains, boils, swellings, snake bites, coughs, fevers, and debility. One writer stated, "Indians will for a trifle allow themselves to be bitten by a rattlesnake and cure themselves at once."



**Name Origin:** The Genus Name, *Antennaria* (an-ten-AR-I-a), is from the Latin word, antenna, meaning "extended thing." This is because the pappus of the male flowers

© 1997 Janice Stiefel  
Plymouth, WI

Tiger Moth

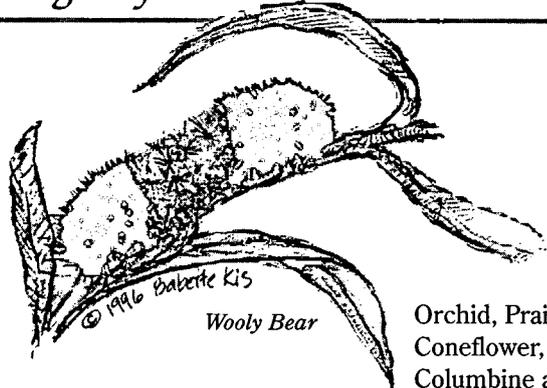


## MOTHS

Moths and butterflies belong to a group of insects known as lepidoptera (Lepp-ih-DOP-ter-uh). There are about ten times as many kinds of moths as there are butterflies. Some moths, like Bumblebee Moths, fly during the day. These moths sip nectar from plants such as Wild Bergamot, Evening Primrose, Prairie Phlox and Prairie Thistle. Most moths, including Luna Moths, Cecropia Moths, Tiger Moths and many others, fly at night.

### DO YOU KNOW THAT..

- Moths are found throughout the world, from the tropics to sub-arctic areas.
- Many night-flying moths are attracted to light. On a warm, windless night after sunset, they can be seen flying around street and porch lights.
- Some night-flying moths avoid light. If you shine a light on these moths, they will fly away.
- Moths pollinate more kinds of plants than butterflies do.



Woolly Bear

Some native wildflowers, such as Evening Primrose, Ladies' Tresses Orchid, Prairie Phlox, Purple Coneflower, milkweed, Wild Columbine and yuccas are

pollinated by moths. In desert areas, moths pollinate many kinds of cactus flowers.

- Most moth caterpillars never turn into moths. They are eaten by birds such as warblers, Bobolinks and Northern Orioles. Amphibians such as American Toads and Leopard Frogs catch moths that fly near them. Both day- and night-flying moths are caught in the webs of Black and Yellow Garden Spiders, Shamrock Spiders and other web-spinning spiders. Mammals, including Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrels, White-footed Mice and Brown Bats, catch moths. Small Tachinid (TAK-ih-nid) Flies lay their eggs in some caterpillars.

### THINGS TO DO

Ask an adult to help you do these things.

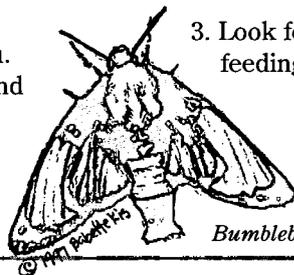
The best times to see summer moths are on warm, calm nights and warm, sunny days.

1. Go mothing at night, just after sunset. You will need a flashlight, notebook and pencil. Write the date and the temperature in your notebook. Go to a flower garden or natural landscape and look for moths pollinating Purple Coneflower, Evening Primrose, Blazing Star and other flowers. Do they land on the flower when they sip nectar? Do they fly away when they see your light? Do some have bright colors or patterned wings? Write what you see in your notebook.

2. Use moth bait to make moths come to you. You will need a small bowl, potato masher, and a teaspoon for mixing the moth bait. Ingredients are one over-ripe banana and about one-half cup of apple juice. Instead of

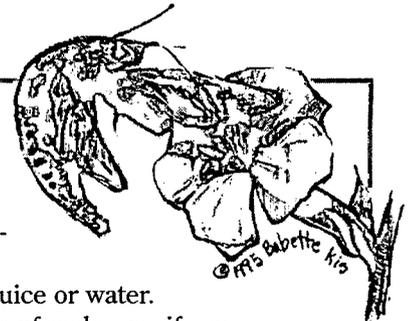
apple juice, you may use one-half cup of water with two table-spoons of sugar in it. Mash the banana in the bowl. Stir in the juice or water. You may want to add a teaspoon of molasses, if you have some. Let the mixture sit for two days at room temperature before you use it. To use your moth bait, get an old, clean paint brush. Before sunset, paint a twelve-inch circle of moth bait on a large tree trunk or fencepost. At dusk, take your flashlight and look for moths that are attracted to the moth bait. In the morning, have an adult wash the moth bait off of the tree or post. If it is not washed off, it may attract Yellow Jacket Hornets during the day.

3. Look for caterpillars, like Woolly Bears, feeding on leaves and flowers at night.



Bumblebee Moth

White-lined Hawkmoth nectaring on Evening Primrose

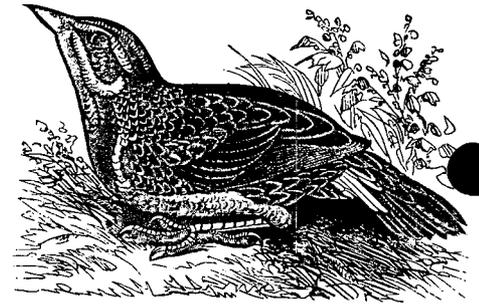


Babette K15



Hawkmoth Caterpillar





# COMPASS PLANT (Silphium laciniatum)

*This column focuses on a plant species that is valued by birds found in the upper Midwest. Each submission presents a plant that is in its prime during the time you are likely to be enjoying this publication*

*Eastern Meadowlark*

The Compass Plant leads us back in history to a time when European settlers forged west in search of new frontiers, and to a time when Native American children used the sap for chewing gum. This classic prairie plant sports large, deeply-lobed leaves, and a man-high stalk with yellow daisy-like flowers on top. Even folks who are not experienced botanists can identify this wildflower by its distinctive leaf structure and north-south leaf orientation (leaves turn so their edges face north-south on sunny days). Compass Plants are members of the sunflower family. Anyone interested in attracting seed-eating birds should buy stock in these attractive and hardy tall grass prairie plants.

**Characteristics:** Although Compass Plants are slow-growing from seed, they reward their stewards with longevity, attractive leaves and bird- and butterfly-friendly flowers. Flowers, at their peak during July and August, provide important nectar for insects. This plant benefits from having companion plants such as Big Bluestem, Rattlesnake Master, Yellow Coneflower and Purple Prairie Clover. Connie Ramthun told me of having seen a

field of soybeans with scattered Compass Plants in Missouri in 1994—even tilling had not dissuaded the fifteen-foot root structure of this hardy perennial.

**This Plant Needs:** Compass Plants grow in moderately moist to moderately dry soils. They prefer full sun, but will also tolerate partial shade. Disturbed soil is not much of a problem, as this plant sets up roots quickly!

**Who Benefits:** Grassland birds, such as Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, Dickcissels, Grasshopper Sparrows and Savannah Sparrows, are suffering alarming population declines. Loss of both nesting and feeding habitat are part of the cause. While a single yard or planting area cannot provide nesting habitat for these birds, contiguous groups of them may; and every native plant by itself may provide a feeding opportunity for these and other birds. ☛

—Steve Mahler

*For the Birds is written by Steve Mahler, owner of The Wild Bird Center, Menomonee Falls, WI. Steve welcomes your comments and suggestions at (414) 255-9955. Special thanks to Connie Ramthun of Kettle Moraine Natural Landscaping for her input on this article.*

*When designing your woodland landscape, consider the effect of the rising and setting sun.*  
—Jens Jensen



**Food for thought:**  
*A child taught to fear nature will end up unnaturally fearful.*

## The Front Forty...

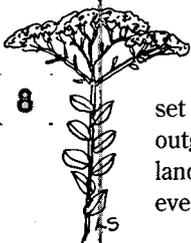
Not long ago I was given a letter that had appeared in an Appleton, WI newspaper. The person who wrote the letter felt that natural landscaping and children didn't belong together. They gave the usual reasons, such as rats, snakes and all the other things that good horror stories are made up of—reasons that I hope are brought on by naivete, not ignorance.

Children and the natural landscape do belong together. For the very young, a simple sandbox and swing set are usually all that is required. When the children have outgrown the area, it can easily be converted into a natural landscape. By giving children plants or seeds, they can even do the planting themselves (with a little help from a

parent). One area that you want to delay construction of with small children is the pond or bog garden. It is usually considered safe to put in a project like this when a child reaches five years of age, and can understand the safety concerns around water.

The natural landscape is a learning experience for children, but it is also a great place to play. Children can use nets to catch butterflies and bugs, they can take colored pencils or crayons and sketch pads to draw on, and they can even go on wild safari hunts in the tall plant areas or the sumac, as my grandchildren do when they come to visit. The natural landscape lends itself very well to a child's imagination.

—Judy Crane



*Editor's note: Common Rats (also known as Brown or Norway Rats) are often found where containers of food scraps are present. Common Rats do not live in native landscapes—these habitats do not provide a food source for them. Garter Snakes are sometimes found in sunny native landscapes. These snakes eat insects and other small animals, and are harmless to people. Contrary to popular belief, mosquitos do not multiply in grasses, woodlands or gardens. Mosquito larva live in standing water, which may be found in discarded soda cans, tires or ponds. Pond dwellers, such as tadpoles and Dragonfly Nymphs, eat mosquito larva.*

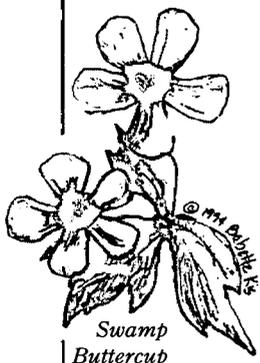
# Flower Folklore

In earlier centuries, people thought that the shape of a plant was a sign of its medical properties. According to this practice, known as the Doctrine of Signatures, Hepatica, because of its liver-shaped leaf, was thought to be a cure for liver ailments. In *The Lore of Flowers* by Neil Ewart, Hepatica, or Liverleaf, was thought to impart confidence to the person who saw it. A European farmer, finding this plant growing on or near his farmland, may have felt his land would produce abundant crops. When settlers came to the New World, they found two American Hepaticas, Round-lobed Hepatica and Sharp-lobed Hepatica, growing among countless other wildflowers on the vast forest floors. Did seeing these flowers, so like their European Hepatica, give these early Americans confidence that this land, too, would produce abundant crops?

As settlers proceeded west, the deciduous forests of the east gave way to tracts of scattered trees and treeless land. Initially thought to be poor land because forests did not grow on it, this soil was soon found to out-produce woodland soil by two- and three-fold. Farmers flocked to the Midwest prairies, looking for the best of this soil, which was said to be found where the Prairie Pointers grew. Today, over 99 percent of these Tall Grass Prairies have been converted to farmland, and a spring meadow of pink and white Prairie Pointers or Shooting Stars is a rare sight.

Turkeyfoot Grass, commonly found growing with Shooting Stars, was named for the fancied resemblance of its three-parted tassels—each known as a spikelet—to a turkey's three-toed foot.

When I was a child, an elderly neighbor told me that fields of Turkeyfoot, today commonly called Big Bluestem, were good bird-hunting lands in the late 1800's and early 1900's. This same lady told me that Gayfeathers were named for their resemblance to the lavender feathers Victorian ladies wore in their hats. Purple, she explained, was a popular color for clothes at the turn of the century, and a light purple, such as the color of these flowers, was most coveted. At turn-of-the-century weddings, she said, brides carried wild white roses to denote purity and bring good luck. Apparently this good luck was not long extended to at least one groom.



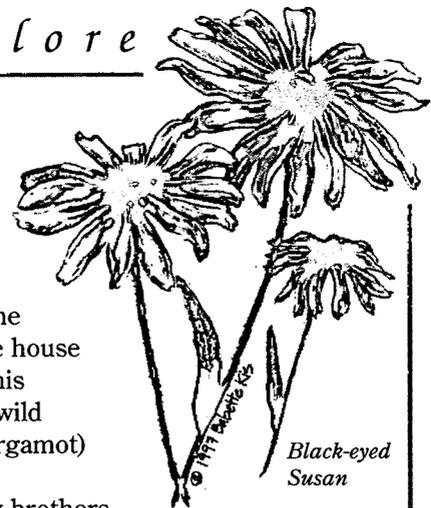
Swamp  
Buttercup

My neighbor confided that her mother-in-law would not let her father-in-law, who smoked cigars on the porch, back into the house until he freshened his breath by chewing wild pink mint (Wild Bergamot) leaves.

As children, my brothers, sister and I picked spring buttercups from the fields and rubbed the flowers under our friends' chins (after we caught them). When the pollen turned their skin yellow, we told them that they liked butter. Fortunately for us, the buttercup that we used was the native Swamp Buttercup, *Ranunculus septentrionalis*, not the European Buttercup, *Ranunculus acris*, whose sap, according to Sanders in *Hedgemaids and Fairy Candles*, causes skin to blister, or the Cursed Crowfoot, *Ranunculus sceleratus*, whose sap is even more potent. It was in these same fields that I sometimes caught my sister (a precocious ten year old) plucking ray petals from Black-eyed Susans and chanting, "he loves me, he loves me not." Violets dipped in sugar, we read in an elementary school story, were exchanged by lovers in the Appalachian Mountains. That was silly, I noted in my fifth grade journal. Why dip a flower in sugar when you could pick the spur of a Wild Columbine, bite off the narrow end, and suck the nectar out?

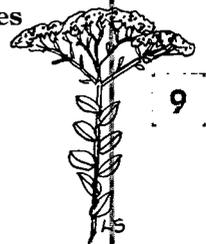
For hundreds of years, flower folklore was passed along from generation to generation. By listening to these stories, generations of children learned not only folklore, but history and how to recognize native plants. Today, these tales are all but lost. In our hurried, modern world we have no time for such stories. **Should we make time for them? Would our children—would we—benefit by rediscovering the delights of making candied violets, of collecting Everlastings to brighten fall days, or of warming ourselves with a cup of Wild Bergamot tea on a cold winter morning?**

—Copyright 1997 Babette Kis



Black-eyed  
Susan

Butterfly  
Weed  
(*Asclepias  
tuberosa*)  
was called  
pleurisy root  
because it  
was used by  
Native  
Americans  
to treat lung  
infections  
and  
congestion.



## ROCK RIVER VALLEY ADOPTS A PRAIRIE, WORKS TO PROTECT A WETLAND

The Rock River Valley chapter of Wild Ones is in the PRAIRIE state of Illinois. Although we have woodlands and wetlands, most of our natural heritage is PRAIRIE. In order to naturally landscape our properties, we search for sources of PRAIRIE seeds and plants.

By calling the county highway engineer, Wild Ones obtained approval to collect seeds at a roadside prairie site last fall. Our chapter decided that if this remnant was going to survive and provide seeds for future natural landscapes, we would have to adopt the remnant. With this in mind, we asked for and received approval from the highway department to be stewards for the prairie.

Being a steward is going to require hard work. Wild Ones Jim and Maggie Kincaid, Kent Walker, Fran Lowman, John and Kim Vollmer, Bruce and Mary Anne Mathwich, friends and relatives, along with Mike Jones from the Natural Land Institute have begun clearing brush. Mike Jones has determined a burn plan for early spring and acquired the proper permits.

Plans for the prairie include inventorying the plants, photographing the prairie at various stages and

times of year, putting up signs, re-seeding the road side next to the prairie and collecting seeds for school, forest preserve and personal landscaping projects. Volunteers who can help on the prairie or help burn (with little notice, with or without prairie burn experience) should call Mary Anne Mathwich at 815-332-4367.

Another project by Wild Ones Fran Lowman, Anne Meyer, Bruce and Mary Anne Mathwich is an advocacy project to protect a wetland next to the Kishwaukee River near Cherry Valley, IL. Along with other members of the Cherry Valley community, a group called the Friends of the Kishwaukee River have spoken before interested environmental and civic groups and spearheaded a petition drive to bring attention to a proposed sand and gravel mining operation to be filled by a fill-in and development. A copy of the wetland delineation report shows that the affected area collectively scored a Floral Quality Index of 42. A score of 20 to 25 is considered good. If this wetland is saved, it will be because of the leadership and devotion of Wild Ones Fran and Anne.

—Mary Anne Mathwich, President  
Rock River Valley Chapter

## FOX VALLEY AREA WILD ONES CELEBRATE

The Fox Valley Area Chapter of Wild Ones is flourishing! Since forming with the requisite 15 members in late November 1994, we have grown to over 200 member households. We celebrated our second birthday by sponsoring our first all-day Natural Landscaping Conference. The conference, held at the Oshkosh Convention Centre on January 18, 1997, drew over 400 participants and brought in 66 new members.

In order to give direction to all this growth and enthusiasm, our small group of officers decided it was time to chart our goals. Wild Ones member Dale Feinauer, Ph.D., offered to facilitate a five-hour strategic planning session on Sunday afternoon, March 2, 1997.

Out of this process, a dozen chapter goals were developed, as follows:

1. All schools in the Fox Valley area will have native planting areas and outdoor classroom curricula.
2. Our chapter members will become knowledgeable about native landscaping and take Dig Plant Rescue) Training.
3. There will be more visible native plantings on public and private lands.

4. Native plants and seeds will be readily available and reasonably priced and professional landscapers will recommend native plants when designing yards.
5. Wild Ones membership will increase and there will be a ready supply of strong leaders
6. Local ordinances will encourage rather than discourage natural landscaping.
7. Developers will seek the advice of Wild Ones before developing property.
8. A consortium of like-minded groups will be established.
9. Our chapter will have a home base freely accessible to the public.
10. Destructive, invasive plants will decrease.
11. More natural landscaping classes will be offered at area institutions of higher education.
12. Endangered wildlife and plants will return to our environment.

Lorrie Otto says we should celebrate where we live. What better way to do that than to work toward these goals which affirm the stated mission of Wild Ones?

—Carol Niendorf  
Fox Valley Area Chapter

*New Jersey  
Tea  
(Ceanothus  
americanus)  
was used as  
a traditional  
remedy  
for lung  
infections.*



## GROWING WILD ROSES FROM SEED

Wild roses are found throughout the United States in Zones 4-9. Two species found in the Midwest include *Rosa carolina* Pasture Rose and *Rosa blanda* Meadow Rose. These roses are native to prairies and prairie edges and often grow from one to three feet high in moderately moist loam to clay loam soil with a pH ranging from 6.5 to 8.0. Pasture Rose has sparsely prickly stems and Meadow Rose has no prickles. Both of these roses have pale pink or white flowers. Each flower has five petals and numerous bright yellow stamens. Both Pasture and Meadow Rose bloom from late spring through summer.

Flowers of these and other roses are often pollinated by bees, flies, moths and beetles. By late summer or early fall, the flowers grow into red or dark orange rose hips. These fruits are very high in vitamin C. Native Americans and settlers collected these ripe rose hips and used them to make tea or ate them mixed with meats.

Collect rose hips when they are red or dark orange. In Wisconsin, these fruits are usually ripe around the first frosts, when the rose leaves have turned from green to burgundy. In order to germinate well, rose seeds must be planted immediately after collecting. Planting beds should be located in full sun or part shade. Soil should be loam, with a pH around neutral. Break the hips open and place them on the soil's surface or cover them with a quarter-inch of soil. Cover this with about an inch of Sugar Maple, oak or ash leaves. Keep the leaves in place by covering them with breathable polymesh (clear polyethylene with holes), which may be secured with U-pins or rocks. Mark the location of the seeds.

Seedlings rarely, if ever, appear during the first spring. Leave the polymesh over the planting bed until the following spring. In the second spring, most of the seeds should germinate. Leave the polymesh over the seeds to conserve moisture while the seedlings are germinating. The mesh may be removed during late summer, or propped up to provide "headroom" for the rapidly growing seedlings. Rose seedling may be transplanted to their permanent location the year after they germinate. Pasture and Meadow Roses often bloom for the first time during their third growing season.

To protect your roses from fall-through-spring rabbit damage, cover them in fall with screening or polymesh, or install a temporary fence around them. If you have year-round rabbit problems, you may want to use a permanent fence or other barrier to protect your roses. 🐰

—Excerpted from *Growing Midwest Prairie Plants from Seed, Great Lakes Wildflowers*, 1985.

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Meadow Rose  
flower and hips



### For Further Reading on History and Folklore of Wildflowers...

*The History and Folklore of North American Wildflowers*  
Timothy Coffey, 1993.

Great reference includes nearly 700 plants. Includes uses as food, medicine, cosmetic, poison and fiber by Native Americans and colonists. Numerous line drawings.

*Hedgemaids and Fairy Candles: The Lives and Lore of North American Wildflowers*, Jack Sanders, 1993.

Reports medicinal purposes of many commonly seen native and non-native plants found primarily east of the Rockies. Covers natural history, folklore, origin of name and place in literature.

*Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie: An Ethnobotanical Guide*  
Kelly Kindscher, 1987.

Focuses on importance of wild plants used by Native Americans, explorers and travelers, plus present day uses. Illustrations and range maps are included. Companion book *Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie* by Kindscher also available.

*Aldo Leopold: A Fierce Green Fire*  
Marybeth Lorbiecki, 1996.

New, illustrated biography of one of America's foremost conservationists.

### Books for Children...

*A Child's Book of Wildflowers*  
M.A. Kelly, 1992.

Identifies 24 wildflowers by most common name and Latin name. Gives historical information and tells which are native plants. Beautiful watercolor illustrations.

*Fairy Dusters and Blazing Stars: Exploring Wildflowers with Children*, Suzanne M. Samson, 1994.

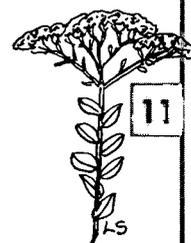
Natural history section follows full-page, whimsical, color illustrations and very simple text.

*The Legend of the Bluebonnet*  
Tomie DePaola, 1983.

Combines legend about origin of Texas Bluebonnet and story of a Comanche child's sacrifice and courage. Simple text and softly-colored illustrations.

—MaryAnn Maki

All books and videos available from Schlitz  
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Phone (414) 352-2880, FAX (414) 352-6091.



# Restore Your Natural Environment

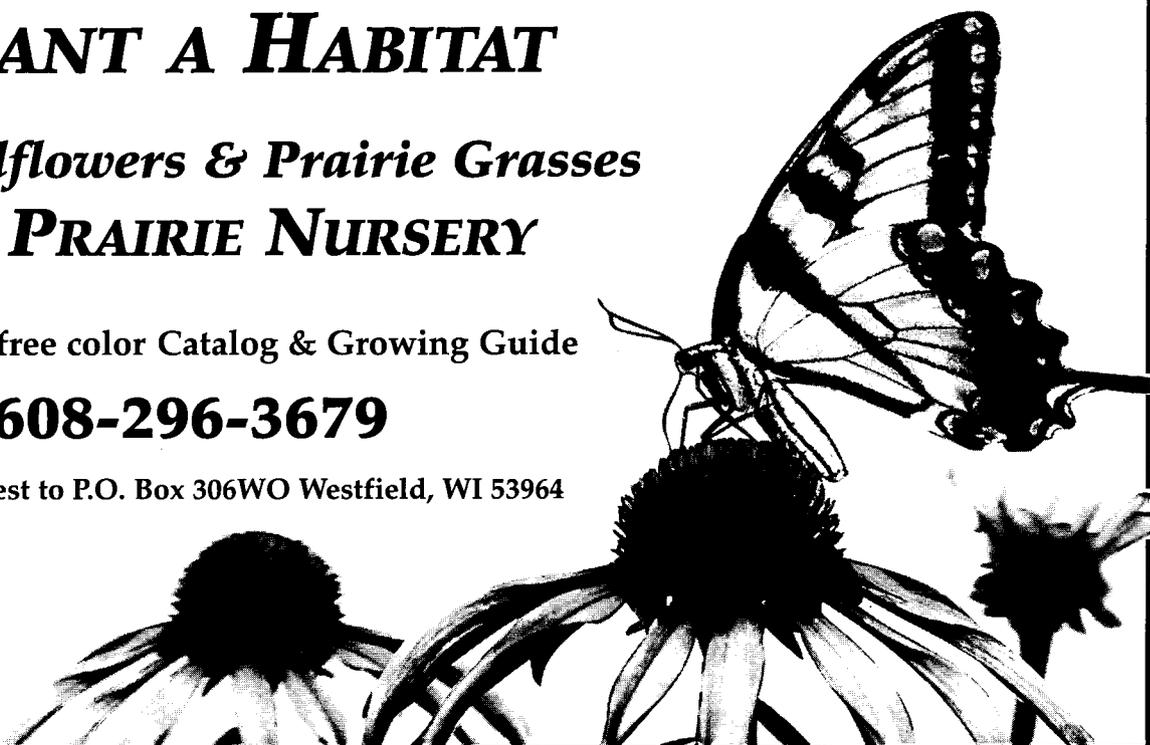
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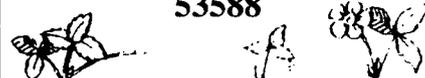
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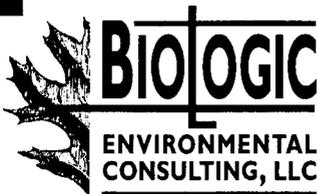
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Each sign costs \$18 (plus \$3 shipping and handling). Checks for \$21 should be made payable to Wild Ones. Mark the envelope "Sign" and mail to Wild Ones, P.O. Box 23576, Milwaukee, WI 53223-0576. Signs will be sent by first-class mail. Signs will be sent promptly if in stock. You will be notified only if there will be a significant delay.

Bulk orders will be accepted from chapters only. For bulk orders, remit \$20 per sign to the same address. Bulk orders will be sent to one address.



**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-root' level and to promote biodiversity and environmentally sound practices. We are a diverse membership interested in natural landscaping using native species in developing plant communities.

Wild Ones—Natural Landscapers, Ltd. was incorporated in 1990 in the State of Wisconsin, under the Wisconsin Non-Stock Corporation Act for educational and scientific purposes. Wild Ones is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is publicly supported as defined in Sections 170(b)(1)(iv) and 509(a). Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

## 20TH ANNUAL LORRIE OTTO NATURAL YARD TOUR SATURDAY, AUGUST 2

**Milwaukee area homes will be the focus of this year's annual Lorrie Otto Audubon Wild Yards Tour.** The guided tour, held rain or shine, begins and ends at the Schlitz Audubon Center, 1111 E. Brown Deer Road, Bayside, WI. Two buses will leave the center promptly at 9 AM, one heading north, the other south. After a lunch break in a local park, the buses will head out

again in opposite directions, returning to the center at 3:30 PM. Cost of this adults-only tour is \$15 for FOSAC and Wild Ones members, \$18 for non-members. Participants should bring a bag lunch, including beverage, a camera and notepad. For more information and to register, call Schlitz Audubon Center at 414-352-2880.



## The meeting place

**NOTE:** *The January-February issue of this newsletter was replaced with the Wild Ones Handbook. Additional copies are available for \$7 each. Send check payable to Wild Ones to our P.O. Box. Mark 'Handbook' on envelope.*

### ILLINOIS

#### LAKE-TO-PRAIRIE CHAPTER

**July 12**—Field trip to naturally landscaped garden of Wild Ones members Jina and Bret Rappaport, Deerfield, IL. Location: meet at Rappaport's, 11:00 am; bring sack lunch. For directions call (847) 945-1315

#### GREATER DuPAGE CHAPTER

*Chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at the College of DuPage, unless otherwise noted. Call Pat Armstrong for info, (708) 983-8404.*

**July 17**—Weeding at Jan Smith Prairie. 6:00 pm-dusk. Directions? Call Jan (630) 653-3958.

**July 20**—Members' Yard Tour. ALL DAY. Volunteers and details? Call Richard 630-858-8632.

**August 23**—Work day 9:00 am-noon. Field trip rest of day to Waubensee College, Bliss Woods, Spring Bluff Nursery, Natural Garden. Details and directions, call Barb 630-488-7900 ext 2454.

#### ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER

*Meet at various locations. Call Jarrett Prairie Center, Byron Forest Preserve at (815) 234-8535 7993 N. River Rd., Byron, IL for information.*

**July 19**—Native Landscape Tour in Rockford area, lead by Fran Lowman. All day.

**August 21**—Tour the Butterfly Garden of Severson Dells with native plant expert Don Miller. 6:30 - 8:30 pm. at the Severson Dells Environmental Center, 8786 Montague Rd., Rockford.

### KANSAS

*Chapter meets monthly. Working on weed ordinance, developing tours. Call Michael S. Almon for info, (913) 832-1300.*

### OHIO

#### COLUMBUS CHAPTER

*Meetings held in Rm. 116, Howlett Hall on Agriculture Campus/Ohio State University, unless otherwise noted. Call Joyce Stephens (614) 771-9273 for information.*

**July 12**—Bruno Dudonis will lead a tour of Smith and Bigelow Cemeteries' beautiful prairie remnants. 9:30 am. Meet in the north parking lot of Der Dutchman restaurant, 445 S. Jefferson, Plain City.

**August 9**—Dr. Jim Davidson will lead a tour of Rhododendron Cove State Nature Preserve. View areas not open to public. 9:30 am. Meet on the steps of Howlett Hall. Bring food, water, hiking boots.

### OKLAHOMA

*Meetings are held on the last Saturday of the month at 10:00 am, Oklahoma State University, Calvin Center, Room 118, unless otherwise noted.*

### MICHIGAN

*Call Dave Borneman for more information (313)994-4834.*

### WISCONSIN

#### FOX VALLEY AREA CHAPTER

*Meetings are held at the Fox Valley Technical College Regional Fire Training Center, 1470 Tullar Road, Neenah at 7 pm, unless otherwise noted.*

**July 26**—Bus tour to UW-Madison Arboretum Prairies (open to members only). 8:15 am App. & 8:45 Osh. K-Mart parking lots.

**August 16**—Bus tour to Wild Ones yards in Fond du Lac area (members only). 9:30am App., 10:00 am Osh., 10:30 am FdLac K-Mart lots.

#### GREEN BAY CHAPTER

*Meetings held at Green Bay Botanical Garden, 7 pm, unless otherwise noted.*

**July 9**—Tour of members' projects. Postcard will be sent with details.

**August 16**—Field trip to Mosquito Hill Nature Center to tour butterfly house and 12-acre prairie. Leave at 9:00 am, carpool. Bring lunch.

#### MADISON CHAPTER

*Meetings held at McKay Center in UW Arboretum, 6:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted.*

**July 26**—Field trip to Prairie's Jubilee at the Goose Pond Sanctuary & Arlington Research Station north of DeForest. Programs run from 7:00 am to 2:30 pm.

**August 28**—Chapter picnic. Robert Ahrenhoerster of the Prairie Seed Source and a naturalist for Milwaukee Public Schools will share stories about native plants and discuss the prairie restoration project at Token Creek County Park south of DeForest (at intersection of Hwy 51 and I-90/94) Meet at the park at 6:30 pm. Bring a hot dish and a cold dish to pass and your table service. Bring kids and friends!

#### MILWAUKEE—NORTH CHAPTER

*Meetings held at Schlitz Audubon Center, second Saturday of the month, 9:30 am, unless otherwise noted.*

**July 12**—Bus tour to Bret and Jina Rappaport's yard. Bring lunch, notebook and camera. Call Chris Reichert (414-284-0855) to register and for with information regarding logistics if you plan to bring children. Bus leaves at 9:30 am from the Brown Deer Road Park & Ride off I-43.

**August 9**—Wild Ones Annual Meeting, see page 3.

#### MILWAUKEE—WEHR CHAPTER

*Meetings held at Wehr Nature Center, second Saturday of the month, 1:30 pm, unless otherwise noted.*

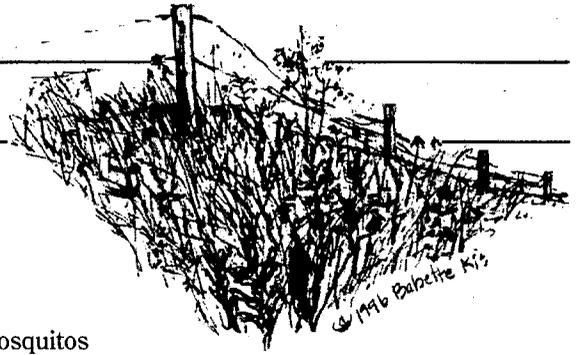
**July 12**—Bus trip to Bret and Jina Rappaport's naturally landscaped yard and adjacent wildlife refuge. Reservations are necessary. Meet at Rawson Ave. Park & Ride at 10 am. Bring a lunch.

**August 9**—Wehr hosts Wild Ones Annual Meeting! Bring your lunch. See page 3.

**August 20**—Ben Hunt Cabin & Prairie Tour with Richard Barloga. Meet at the Hales Corners Library at 5:30 pm.

# NATURE CALENDAR

July through August



## When and Where

## Event

On prairies and in open fields	Dozens of prairie plants flower
At dusk over fields, wood and suburbs	Bats catch night-flying moths, mosquitos and other insects
Deciduous woodlands	Young Red-headed Woodpeckers emerge from their nests in hollow trees
Thickets, shrubby places when thistles are blooming	Goldfinches lay eggs in nests of thistledown
White Gentians bloom	Migrating Nighthawks fill the dusk sky
August fields and prairies	Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrels and Kestrels catch grasshoppers

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### Attention Wild Ones

Have you discovered something interesting about your natural landscape? Do you have a time-saving tip for growing or planting? Do you know of an interesting seasonal event that takes place in coming months? If so, please write. Deadlines for sending typed articles or illustrations are as follows:

Jan./Feb. issue	copy due Nov. 7	July/Aug. issue	copy due May 7
Mar./April issue	copy due Jan. 7	Sept./Oct. issue	copy due July 7
May/June issue	copy due March 7	Nov./Dec. issue	copy due Sept. 7

All articles should be sent to: **Babette Kis, 6048 N. 114th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53225.**  
If material is to be returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

### Wild Ones Membership

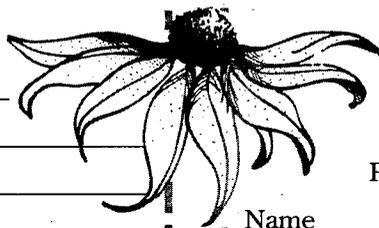
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