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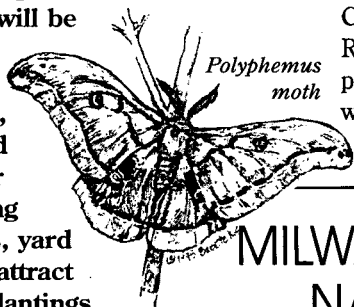
A VOICE FOR THE NATURAL LANDSCAPING MOVEMENT

Wild Ones®



Compass Plant seedling
© H.D. Burpee & Co.

The focus of the conference is the homeowner, with sessions on the how to's and "whys" of using native plants in yards for novice, intermediate and advanced gardeners. Conference sessions will be held on prairie plantings, woodland plants, water gardens using native plants, yard elements to attract birds, and plantings to attract butterflies and moths.



field on natural landscaping. Don is the National Director of Wild Ones.

MAS is honored that internationally renowned proponent and founder of natural landscaping, Lorrie Otto, has offered to present a session on "Flood Control—A Public and Private Responsibility." Otto had retired from public speaking, but in response to the widespread flooding in local municipalities in 1997, offered to present what

a basic how-to-do a prairie planting by Robin Greenler, UW Madison Arboretum, and Marc White, naturalist for Retzer Nature Center, to more advanced information about prairie planting from internationally known nurseryman Neil Diboll, himself the subject of many books. Native plantings for shady areas will be covered in sessions by design consultant Dan Boehlke, and Cheryl Haberman, UW-Madison Arboretum.

MILWAUKEE AUDUBON SOCIETY 18TH ANNUAL NATURAL LANDSCAPING CONFERENCE

"Nature in the New Millennium—A Designer's Thought on Healing, Wonder and Our Sense of Place" is the title of the keynote address by Don Vorpahl, Environmental Designer, who is the Julie Marks Wild Ones Memorial lecturer. Vorpahl has done fantastic work in the

will be a very well-researched, provocative and timely session on this topic. If your yard or basement was flooded in past years, or your municipality has flooding problems, you will find this session invaluable.

Sessions on prairie planting include

Haberman has developed an incredible woodland plant database and will be presenting information about it. Landscaping using native trees and shrubs will be covered in Dr. Evelyn Howell's session. Both Greenler and
(continued on next page)

The Milwaukee Audubon Society 18th Annual Natural Landscaping Conference will be held February 21st, 1998, from 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Union, 2200 E. Kenwood Boulevard, Milwaukee, WI.

The Wild Ones Journal is made possible in part by the generous support of Liberty Prairie Foundation.

(continued from page 1)

Haberman work for the Earth Partnership Program at the UW-Madison Arboretum, and their sessions will also be on establishing native planting in school yards, parks and other public areas.

For those wanting to attract birds, butterflies and moths, or to better understand the insect life in native planting, the conference has sessions for you. Back by popular demand is Robert

Ahrenhoerster with a session on "Insects and Insect Folklore." National speaker Janice Stiefel will present a session on "Butterflies and Moths, Identification and Plant Requirements." There will also be a session on attracting birds to your yard and bird identification by Dan Panetti, MAS director.

Homeowners wanting information on plantings for low areas and wet areas under downspouts and creating small ponds will find the session on native

water gardens, to be presented by Annette Alexander of Wild Ones, perfect. There will also be sessions on growing native plants by David Kopitzke.

The cost for this conference of 16 renown speakers, including the founder of the natural landscaping movement, Lorrie Otto, is \$25 per person, payable in advance or at the door. For further information call Milwaukee Audubon Society at (414) 375-1565. *ra*

—Linne Petri
Milwaukee Audubon Society

Contagious Energy

That's what Julie Marks gave to anyone with whom she made contact. What spirit this vital woman had and how willing she was to share this energy! You could feel it—she was interested in you. Many might think that she was their best friend—the neighbors, her children, her husband, her mother, her relatives and many others in the community whose lives she touched.

Wild Ones was lucky to have her for a best friend, too. At the time that Julie became secretary, our entire membership was less than 100. Julie immediately made it her goal to get at least 200 members by the next year. She believed in the Wild Ones' philosophy that one should have sensitivity to land use and that harmony with plants, animals and the land is of high priority. Anyone she spoke with that year had a hard time saying "no" when asked to become a member, and by the end of that year there were over 200 members!

At her own home on the corner of Brown Deer Road and Greendale in Bayside, she was determined to set up a barrier to keep out street noise. The beginning of the famous berms that you pass



Julie Marks

going East on Brown Deer Road towards the Schlitz Audubon Center began after clay from construction at Cardinal Stritch College was used to make the base for the 10-foot "undulating humps."

With a bit of prairie and woodland in her mind, Julie knew how the area would expand and bloom into something wonderful someday. Although willing in mind and spirit, her body did not cooperate.

With the help of landscape designer Don Vorpahl, a wonderful plan was created that involved the planting of 2200 plants with a deadline that Judy's body would dictate. In late October 1988 "friends" arrived at the berms and the planting was completed in one day. Julie was able to enjoy and appreciate her landscape of wildflowers throughout the next spring and summer.

We can all breathe in Julie's spirit, dedication and determination as we drive down Brown Deer Road. We should all enjoy it, for that is the way she wanted it to be.

Don Vorpahl will be the Wild Ones Julie Marks Memorial Fund speaker at the Milwaukee Audubon Natural Landscaping Conference on February 21. *ra*

—Rae Sweet
Milwaukee North Chapter

Prairie Tips From Andy

- Start small. A 900 sq. ft. plot can absorb your attention (and money) for a long time.
- A prairie planting should be treated like an advanced class in plant ecology. You must be prepared to learn an enormous amount.
- Prepare a landscape plan. Be aware that your neighbors may not be as enthusiastic about the beauty of a prairie as you are. Leave a mowed corridor between your yard and theirs.
- Prepare your site thoroughly This is the most critical step in the success of your planting.
- Eliminate the potential for weeds. Know the difference between a weed and a wild flower.
- Select a seed mix appropriate for your soil. Underestimate grass seed needs and overestimate forb seed needs.
- Be patient. Remember that you are establishing a marriage between the prairie flora and fauna that should last more than your lifetime.
- Learn about the many creatures that will be co-inhabitants with you and your prairie planting.
- Prepare a long-term plan for litter removal, investigate the possibility of using fire and the opportunity to enrich your planting through top seeding or addition of plants.

—Andy Larson
Riveredge Nature Center, Newburg, WI





TOWARD HARMONY WITH NATURE II

Conference to Be Held in Oshkosh, WI Saturday, January 31, 1998

The Fox Valley Area Chapter's second annual all-day natural landscaping conference will take place Saturday, January 31, 1998, at the Oshkosh Convention Center. Conference Chair Carol Niendorf and her committee hope to repeat last year's successful first event, which drew 400 participants. Expert speakers include:

Session I 8:30-10:00 a.m.

- *Managing Your Prairie Planting*,
Joyce Powers, Founder, President, CRM Ecosystems
- *Natural Landscaping in an Urban Environment*
Lynn White, Environmental Consultant/Owner,
Landscapes, Naturally
- *Native Landscape Restoration: One Elementary School's Success Story*, Karen Winicki, Principal,
Indian Hill Elementary School, River Hills, WI

Keynote - 10:35-11:45 a.m.

Nina Leopold Bradley, Director,
Aldo Leopold Foundation, "Sensitizing People to Land"

Session II 1:00-2:30 p.m.

- *Identification and Control of Weeds in Natural Landscapes*,
Kelly Kearns, Plant Conservation Program Manager
WI DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources
- *Plants for Wet Places*,
Joyce Powers, CRM Ecosystems
- *Starting, Propagating and Caring for Wildflowers*,
David Kopitzke, Landowner Contract Specialist,
WI DNR Bureau of Endangered Resources

Session III 2:45-4:15 p.m.

- *Choosing Native Trees and Shrubs for the Landscape*,
Syd Stephan, Horticulturist/Owner, Horticulture Services
- *Wildflowers and Their Virtues*,
Janice Stiefel, naturalist, author and nature photographer
- *Starting, Propagating and Caring for Wildflowers*,
David Kopitzke (repeat of Session II)

Keynote speaker Nina Leopold Bradley learned her environmental principles firsthand from her father, world-famous environmentalist and author Aldo Leopold. She has degrees and work experience in geography, botany and paleobotany, and holds an honorary doctorate in environmental science from the University of Wisconsin. She has received numerous environmental awards and is widely published, her most recent article being "Toward an Outdoor Ethic," Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine, December 1995.

Kelly Kearns has a B.S. in Horticulture and an M.S. in Plant Community Restoration and Conservation. Since 1984, she has worked on various projects at the Bureau of Endangered Resources. She has been plant conservation program manager for the DNR since 1990, working on rare plant protection, management and restoration of plant communities and identification and control of ecologically invasive plants.

David Kopitzke brings a wealth of education and experience to his topic. He has an M.S. in Plant Ecology, has worked as curator of botany at the Milwaukee Public Museum, started and operated a native plant nursery in southwestern Wisconsin and now works with the Bureau of Endangered Resources protecting rare species on private lands.

Joyce Ann Powers is the founder and president of CRM Ecosystems, a consulting company specializing in the restoration and management of native ecosystems. She pioneered the commercial production of prairie plants and seeds by founding Prairie Ridge Nursery in 1974. She is a consultant on restoration projects to corporate, private and government clients.

Syd Stephan is the owner of Horticulture Services Company, a landscape contracting and native tree/shrub nursery at Scandia, MN. He has extensive experience as a horticulturist, horticulture instructor, landscape project manager and gardening columnist.

Janice Stiefel will bring her skills as naturalist, researcher, author, lecturer and nature photographer to her session on identification of native plants. She writes regular columns for Sierra Club, Cedar Ridge Associates, *The Elkhart Depot Dispatch* and our own *Wild Ones Journal*.

Lynn White, upon completing her masters degree in Environmental Science and Policy, has opened her own business, Landscapes. Naturally. She has worked as a naturalist and property assessment specialist, designed the Parkview Health Center Therapy Garden, is assisting with the Paine Arboretum natural area restoration, and serves on the Neenah Park and Recreation Department Commission and the Neenah Trails Task Force.

Karen Winicki has been principal of Indian Hill School since 1990. She wrote and received an \$11,000 grant for her school's prairie, wetland and woodland restoration. She applied for and received an \$8,000 grant for teacher training and curriculum writing to integrate the school's nature project into all curriculum areas.

An Exhibit Hall will feature 30 exhibitors and vendors of native plants; natural landscape design, installation and maintenance; endangered plants; identification and control of non-native plants; environmental organizations; nature centers; DNR programs and nature arts, crafts and products. A buffet lunch of soup, salad and sandwich fixings will be available.

Folksinger/songwriter Steve Hazell, whose new tape "For the Wild Ones," features three songs he wrote especially for us, will perform before the keynote speech and during the last half of the lunch period. The adjoining Oshkosh Hilton has rooms available for conference participants at \$63 double or single.

Costs for the conference are \$20 per person, \$18 for Wild Ones members in advance; \$25 at the door. Lunch is \$8.50. Brochures and registration forms are available from Carol Niendorf at (920) 233-4853, 4024 Marquart Lane, Omro, WI 54963.

—Carol Niendorf, WI Fox Valley Area Chapter



CONTROLLING WEEDS IN NATURAL LANDSCAPES

Natural landscaping involves not only the delight of planting native species, but also the challenge of keeping invasive species at bay. Most of the plants that are invasive in our natural areas and native landscapes are not native to the upper Midwest. Although some originate elsewhere in North America, such as the clone-forming black locust (*Robinia pseudacacia*) most were introduced from Europe and/or Asia. These are typically referred to as "exotics." Controls of some weed species found in woodland landscapes are discussed here.

Several non-native shrubs can be very invasive in woodlands, parks, yards and even in more open prairie habitats. Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) is ubiquitous in woodlands throughout the Midwest, especially in or near urban areas. Its dark branches have thorn-like spurs and oval leaves with small teeth on the margins. Its tendency to leaf out earlier and stay leafed out later than native species makes it very noticeable in the understory of a woodlot.

Clusters of black fruits remain on the female shrubs until late winter, when the birds feed on them and spread them to other areas.

Glossy Buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*), commonly sold for landscaping as Columnar or Hedge Buckthorn, is especially damaging in the wetter soils of fens, sedge meadows and low-lying woodlands. Heavy infestations result in almost solid impenetrable stands of small trees and shrubs, with a ground flora that is nearly devoid of any native vegetation.

A complex of one hybrid and three species of honeysuckle share similar habitats and characteristics with the buckthorns.

Although there are a few native bush and vining honeysuckles that are much smaller and make excellent understory plantings in a woodland garden, the large shrubby honeysuckles that most of us have in our yards and parks are all Eurasian (*Lonicera tatarica*, *L. morrowii*, *L. maackii*, *L. x bella*). These highly invasive

plants have been used extensively for landscaping and are easily recognized by their dense form, multiple stems, light green opposite leaves and strongly fragrant tubular flowers. The shade produced by these early-leaving shrubs blocks out the sunlight required by the spring wildflowers or other native herbaceous species. Both the honeysuckles and buckthorns form such dense stands that even young trees have difficulty surviving.

Controls for all of these exotic shrubs are similar. Seedlings can be numerous and are fairly easy to pull, especially if the soil is wet. Larger shrubs can be pulled using a leverage tool such as a Weed Wrench. Cutting back the brush without treating the stumps will result in resprouting. Repeated cuttings of the resprouts several times a year for several years can be an effective control in small yards where the infestation is small. Larger infestations are generally handled by cutting the brush and, within a few minutes, treating the stump with an herbicide that will translocate to the roots and kill the plant. Glyphosate (Round-up) is typically used in garden settings as it is easy to acquire, relatively benign once it reaches the soil, and does not require

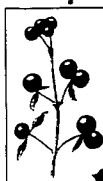
the applicator to be certified in pesticide application. A solution of 15-20% active ingredient can be applied with a sponge or small spray bottle on the cut stump. Cut-stump herbicide treatments can be done at any time of the year, but tend to be most effective in the fall or winter. In prairies, savannas or oak woods, burning on a regular basis can be an effective control for these shrubs.

For further information on controlling invasive plants in natural areas, parks or native landscapes, see the Wisconsin Manual of Control Recommendations for Ecologically Invasive Plants. The manual is available at many public libraries, county extension and DNR offices in Wisconsin. Or request your own copy from the Bureau of Endangered Resources, WDNR, Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921, 608-266-7012 or via e-mail at "ber@state.wi.dnr.us".

— Kelly Kearns, Bureau of Endangered Resources, Wisconsin DNR

General Pointers for Weed Control in Natural Landscapes

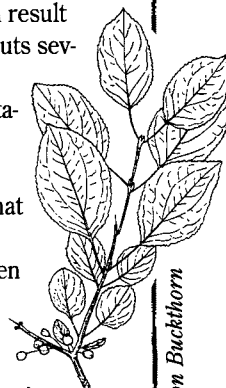
- Always wear gloves. When working around known dermatotoxic plants like wild parsnip and poison ivy, always wear long sleeves and long pants.
- Prioritize your efforts by identifying new or isolated infestations where eradication is feasible rather than trying to remove a small patch in a sea of weeds.
- With all weedy species, your efforts will be best expended if you can learn to identify them at an early stage of invasion and remove them before they spread or begin to produce seeds.
- After pulling any weedy species, it is generally best to tamp down the soil to discourage establishment of weed seedlings. Replanting with native species and application of a heavy mulch can also discourage weed seeds from emerging.
- With the weedy shrubs, target the seed-producing plants for removal first.



Tatarian honeysuckle



Common Buckthorn



WHAT **ARE** THOSE CLINGY SEEDS

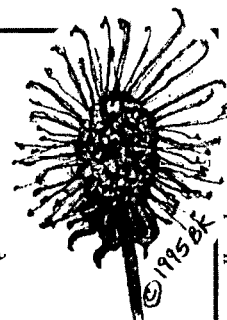
Ever taken a fall or winter hike in a field or woodland and found unwanted seeds clinging to your clothes.

If you visited a sunny field or prairie, you might have picked up small, tick-shaped fruits of tick-trefoil (*Desmodium species*), called tickseeds. If your trip was to a damp, sunny or partly sunny area, you might find pitchforks sticking to your coat. Pitchforks are the seeds of several kinds of Bur Marigolds or Tickseeds (*Bidens species*). Avens (*Geum canadense* and related species) are found in moist to dry areas in sun or part shade. Their seedheads are covered with hooks which readily catch on clothing and pet fur. As you walk through a woodland area, small, rounded seeds of Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea species*) may hitch a ride on your clothing. Burdock (*Arctium minus*) burs have very prickly spines and an affinity for pets and clothing.

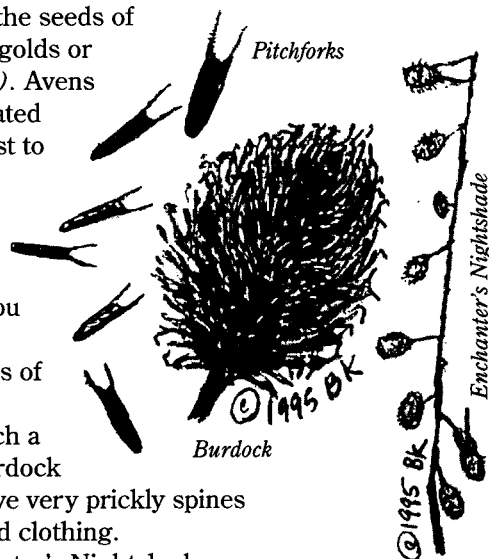
Tickseeds and Enchanter's Nightshade are American plants. Some species of pitchforks and

avens are American, and some are European and Asian. Burdock is an invasive weed of European origin.

—Babette Kis



Avens seedhead



From the Editor

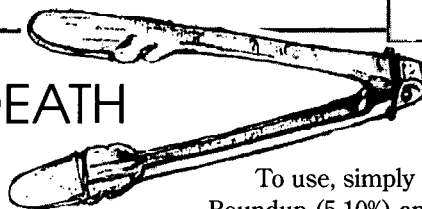
Beginning with the March-April 1998 issue, editing and layout of WOJ will again be in the capable hands of Joy Buslaff. I would like to thank many Wild Ones for their encouragement during my year as editor. Thanks to Lorrie Otto, Bret Rappaport, Janice Stiefel, Judy Crane, Joy Buslaff, Steve Mahler and MaryAnn Maki and many others for making our journal the fine publication it is. I especially want to thank Kerry Thomas for her wonderful layout work and patience and Mandy Ploch for her critical eye in reviewing copy. In my future "spare time" I plan to fill my journals with nature writing and provide illustrations and articles for WOJ.

—Babette Kis

THE TONGS OF DEATH

You may have used the "Glove of Death", a name, I believe, that was coined by Neil Diboll for the cotton glove that was placed over a plastic-gloved hand, then dipped in herbicide and used to touch undesirable plants. This works well, but for more precise weeding, the TONGS OF DEATH may be the answer.

I made this tool from a \$4 stainless steel scalloped nine-inch Ecco kitchen salad tongs and a paint pad (specifically an American Worksaver rolling edger refill), both available at Fleet Farm. To assemble, cut two small, tapered pieces from the paint pad that fit into the last 1' inches of the ends of the salad tongs. Fold over the last three scallops to grip the pads then flatten the opposing ends so that the pads meet squarely.



To use, simply dip the paint pads in a solution of Roundup (5-10%) and close them around the undesirable plant. You should only have to touch each plant once. The paint pad holds enough liquid to treat about ten plants between dips. This enables you to accomplish a difficult task quickly. I was able to "weed" our 1/5 acre prairie in about an hour. Adding food coloring to the solution will tell you which plants have already been treated.

—Stephen Maassen,
VP, WI Fox Valley Area chapter



The results of that three minute NBC show on August 15, 1997 keep reverberating around me. It was good for a second round of applause at the Wisconsin Environmental Education Conference in Madison in October. Afterwards, a teacher said that she used her copy of Brokaw's show as a conclusion to her environmental lecture to her class. Saturday, a young student from UW-Whitewater made a copy to use in his assignment to "interview an environmentalist", and yesterday, in my Unitarian Church, after hearing a lecture by Paul Hayes, another teacher sidled up to me and announced that she had shown her tape several times to her various classes. A woman from Vermont wrote to say that it was a new thought for her when she heard me say that real patriotism is trying to save the earth and the quality

of life that was here when we first arrived in our country. (Flying a flag on the fourth of July doesn't do it.) The only flaw that I could find in the program was the edit that cut me off in mid-sentence about Dames's Rocket being a pretty plant—CUT—"but remember it is a weed and you must not plant it in your native gardens." As it is, I'm afraid I've given that plant a boost from coast to coast.

In conclusion, I must say that I've enjoyed this adventure. And I had a real hoot when the National Wildlife Federation wrote to ask if I had any professional footage of my work. Can you get any more professional than Tom Brokaw? 🐾

—Lorrie Otto

OTTO NATURAL AREA AN OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Outdoor natural areas are quite common at schools around the state. In keeping with Wisconsin's nature study heritage, the Old Northwest Territory spawned such notables as John Muir, Increase Lapham, Aldo Leopold (his ideas were used by Gifford Pinchot to develop the national parks), Sigurd Olson and others, a natural area should be part of every schoolchild's experience.

What is in a "natural area"? The natural area is a place which contains native plants growing in an association resembling the associations that are found in native communities. Since most of the native communities have been completely disturbed in southern Wisconsin, natural areas are the only acquaintance students will have with any native plants.

What use are natural areas? The native association of plants in Southern Wisconsin developed over thousands of years. These plants are adapted to this climate and soil and provided the producer base for a tremendous variety of animals. These animals first attracted French trappers to our area, who harvested these animals for profit. Other Europeans who came to America found other ways to profit, especially through mining and farming. The effect of these activities was to decimate the native plants and animals. Native animals were replaced with animals familiar to Europeans. Native grasses and forbs were plowed to create cropland for corn, wheat, oats and other grains, which were used to feed the European animals. Diversity of life has given way to monoculture.

Natural areas are useful because they are relic areas that are dedicated to diversity. Where monoculture looks uniform, linear, organized and controlled, diversity looks organic, disorganized and out of control. In monoculture, it is clear that man is the director. In diversity, it is clear that man is an observer, a participant, but not the director.

Where walking in monoculture is an exercise in predictability, walking in diversity is an exercise in wonder. Where walking in monoculture stimulates feelings of power and control, walking in diversity stimulates feelings of humility. Where monoculture bores children (and many adults), diversity stimulates them and awakens their curiosity. It is one function of schooling to simulate the minds of children, to open minds to other possibilities, and to bring them to a personal acquaintance with the natural world. An outdoor classroom filled with native plants which will attract native animals can be the beginning of a child's adventure with the diversity of life. 🐾

—Richard Butt, Bayside, WI Science Teacher



ECOLOGICAL GARDENING WITH NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN FLOWERS AND GRASSES

Naturalistic gardening is becoming

increasingly popular in the United States. There are numerous reasons for this rise to prominence. First, gardening in harmony with Nature is partly founded in the new environmental ethic that has developed in the last 30 years. Reacting against the pervasive use of chemicals in the landscape and the incessant howl of lawnmowers, people have sought an alternative to the manicured carpet of lawn that was mandated by a century-old unspoken social compact. The answer for many has become the American Prairie.

The prairie provides us with a model ecosystem that we can literally transplant into our yards. The prairie represents a distinct plant community, an assemblage of plants that, by their association, define the community. The prairie occurs as many different plant combinations, responding to soil and climate changes across its range, from east to west and north to south. At any location within the prairie continuum across the central United States, the plants that occur regionally, or were once known to occur, can be selected for use in a prairie meadow landscape.

The first efforts at restoring the American Prairie as a functioning natural plant community were undertaken at the University of Wisconsin in Madison in the 1930's. At that point in history, the once vast Eastern Tallgrass Prairie was all but extinct. One hundred years earlier, this prairie type had covered hundreds of millions of acres, stretching from Texas north into Manitoba (Canada), and from Nebraska and Kansas east to Ohio. In a few short decades in the late nineteenth century, the Eastern Tallgrass Prairie was plowed up and converted into some of the richest farmland in the world.

These examples of prairie restorations were largely inspired by the desire to preserve the local plants and their genetic diversity, as well as to create outdoor teaching facilities. The thought of using prairie plants as an alternative landscape for homeowners and businesses began to emerge in the 1970's as more people became exposed to these restored plant communities.

The prairie is neither a lawn nor a garden. It is an assemblage of plants that, with a little help, will do the lion's share of the work in the landscape for the gardener. Not only will it eliminate the need for watering and the application of most chemicals, it will also do most of the weeding for you. How can this be, you ask? A landscape that weeds itself? Truly revolutionary!


Once established, the prairie is a self-regenerating system. Many prairie plants are prolific seeders, while others expand their territory by vegetative means. Some individual plants can live for many decades. Once established and properly managed, a prairie meadow will outlive the person who plants it. This ability to regenerate itself as a healthy, func-

tioning plant community makes the prairie an extremely stable, yet surprisingly dynamic, landscape.

Ultimately, the creation of a prairie meadow becomes a "Joint Venture with Nature." The gardener defines the content of the meadow by selecting a variety of flowers and grasses that are best adapted to the site. Then conditions for their establishment and growth are created by removing competing weedy vegetation, and enhancing the soil conditions, if necessary, through the addition of organic matter or green manures.

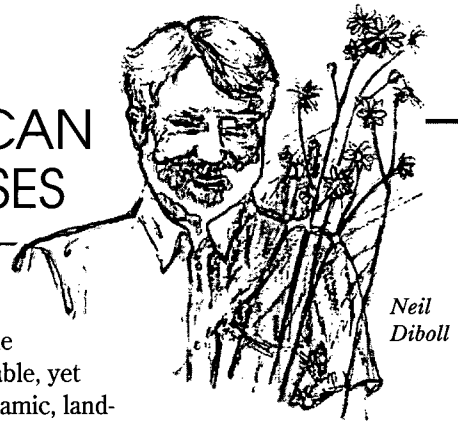
Thus, the prairie meadow has a life of its own and exists not merely as a construct of human design. Control of the prairie meadow is greatly reduced when compared to the garden. Its direction and evolution are largely ceded to natural forces. Our role as prairie meadow caretakers is to encourage the prairie flowers and grasses to flourish on their own terms, while assisting in the battle against undesirable, aggressive weeds that may attempt to invade the meadow from time to time.

Another primary goal of prairie restoration is the encouragement of a diversity of animal life. This includes not only bees, birds and butterflies, but also bugs, rodents, snakes and a host of other creatures. By encouraging bugs, we provide food for baby birds. Rodents and snakes feed hawks and owls. Instead of excluding "undesirable" animals as we do in our traditional lawn and garden landscapes, in the prairie we encourage Nature to produce and revel in her diversity and bounty.

Ultimately we become stewards of our prairie meadows. Rather than tell a friend about the new selections of rose one has successfully grown, the prairie gardener may inform them of their effort to grow a rare species. Or perhaps they might expound on an uncommon species of moth that visited a specific plant in the prairie. The preservation of plant and animal biodiversity in the prairie landscape is often more important than matters of garden design to the ardent prairie restorationist and steward. 

—Neil Diboll

Excerpted from a speech presented at KEW Gardens in London by Neil Diboll, Prairie Nursery, Westfield, WI. Neil will speak at the February 21, 1998 Milwaukee Audubon Society 18th Annual Natural Landscaping Conference, Milwaukee, WI on "Plants, Migration and the Influence of People in the Landscape: An Historical Perspective".



ROUGH HORSETAIL

(*Equisetum hyemale*)

Family: Equisetaceae (Horsetail)

Other Names: Greater Horsetail Common Scouring Rush, Dutch-Rush, Gun-Bright, Mare's-Tail, Shave Grass, Pewterwort, Horse-Pipe, Shave Weed, Bottle Rush.

Habitat: Low and wet places in woods, along streams, on damp shaded slopes, either grassy, sandy or rocky. Found throughout North America, Europe and temperate Asia.

Description: Rough Horsetail is a bamboo-like plant with no leaves. It is tall, slender, dark green, hollow, evergreen, and rough-surfaced. The stems have ash-gray bands outlined above and below by dark green edges at the joints. There are no flowers; its spores are the fruiting heads. It has an evergreen thicket-like growth, being particularly noticeable in winter woods.

Height: 1-4 ft.

Comments: This is a leftover from ancient times. Giant forms of this plant, which are now extinct, were the trees from which much of our coal was formed. The epidermis contains so much silica that bunches of the stem have been sold for polishing metal and used to be imported from Holland for this purpose, hence the popular name of Dutch Rush. It was used for scouring pewter (Pewterwort), brightening gun stocks. The rough stems were used like sandpaper to give a very fine, satiny finish to wood.

The stalks can be used to achieve a yellow-gray dye and the young heads can be boiled and fried like asparagus.

The plant was used as a food source for horses in some parts of Sweden. However, cows are apt to lose their teeth by feeding on it and to be afflicted with diarrhea. Cattle in this country usually instinctively avoid these plants and would probably only eat them in the absence of better fodder.

Medicinal Use: Horsetail is an active diuretic. It has been used to prevent formation of kidney stones and to treat kidney and bladder disorders. It was also of value in eliminating gravel and stones from the urinary tract.



One source says it is toxic to livestock and questionable for humans, claiming that it disturbs thiamine metabolism.

Name Origin: The Genus Name, *Equisetum* (ek-kwee-SEE-tum), is from the Latin words, equus, for "horse," and saeta, for "bristle." The Species Name, *hyemale* (hy-e-MAY-le), means "of winter."

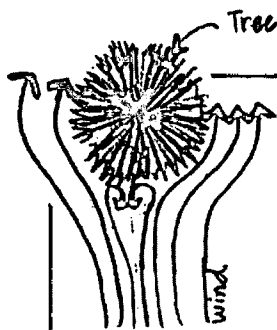
Author's Note: Rough Horsetail grows abundantly on our Plymouth property. Most of it inhabits a north-facing, abandoned railroad embankment along the Mullet River. This would definitely fit its habitat description of a "shaded, rocky slope." It is a very important plant in the daily winter menu of the White-Tailed Deer. At times, ten or more can be seen scattered along the hillside dining on Rough Horsetail. If the snow gets too deep, they take their hoofs and scrape it away until the Horsetail is exposed. I often wonder if they are prone to lose their teeth like cows. If you ever find a deer minus its teeth, maybe this would be the explanation.

According to my research, there are approximately a dozen Horsetail species in the state of Wisconsin. On our property alone, we have the Field Horsetail (*E. arvense*), with bushy branches, growing in damp semi-shaded spots; and Meadow Horsetail (*E. pratense*) growing in similar habitat. These Horsetails send up flesh-colored, fertile stems in early spring. They only last for a few weeks and disappear. They are so fresh and delicate that I would love to pick and preserve all of them. They're similar to a mushroom, in that their appearance is made for a moment in time; then they wither and die. In a way, all of us (humans) fit into that pattern, as well.

If only we had more realization of this fact, maybe then we would have respect for the survival and well-being of our own species. Then, with changed attitudes, perhaps a miracle would happen—the flora and fauna of our earth would not be such a dispensable commodity.

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Plymouth, WI

SNOW & SNOW DRIFTS



Bird's-eye view of wind around tree

Snow can fall when the air temperature gets close to or below freezing. Snow keeps the ground warm in winter like a winter coat keeps a person warm. Air between the snowflakes provides insulation (in SUE lay shun) in the same way air between feathers or material provides insulation in a winter coat. Plant roots

stay warmer in prairies and woodlands, where there is snow over the ground, than they do in lawns. Snow helps keep the soil moist. If the soil dries out over winter, plant roots can dry out and die. After a snowfall, some areas of ground have a lot of snow and others have only a little or no snow. The way the snow drifts depends upon the direction of the wind, whether the ground is flat or hilly, and where trees, buildings and roads are.

DO YOU KNOW THAT...

You can find out which direction snow comes from by watching or listening to your local TV or radio station. Or, during a snowfall, you can go outside and look at the direction the snow is coming from.

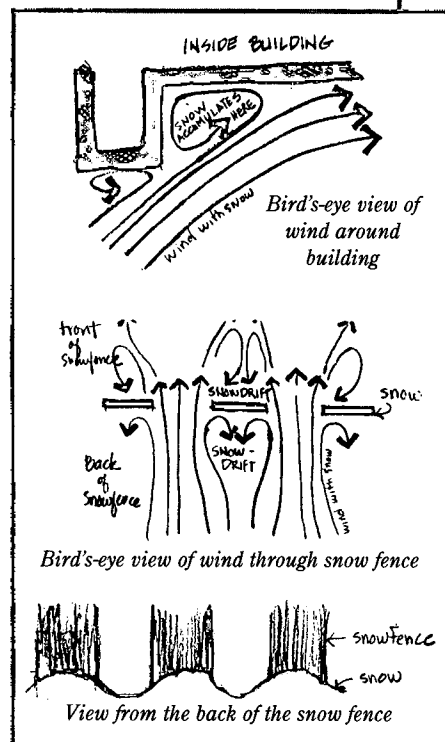
- There are many kinds of snow. Light and fluffy snowflakes often fall when it is very cold. Heavy clumped snowflakes can fall when the temperature is close to freezing.
- All snowflakes have six sides. If you looked at snowflakes for your whole life, you wouldn't find two that looked just the same.
- Snow is a good insulator. New snow that is a foot deep can insulate the ground as well as a child's winter coat.
- Meadow voles and some other rodents make tunnels under the snow. Meadow vole use these "runways" to get from their warm grass nests to their food areas. You can often find their runways when the snow melts.

- Snowdrifts are formed when snow-filled winds slow down and the snow falls to the ground.

THINGS TO DO

Look at the snow around a snowfence. To figure out how a snowfence works, you will need to know which way the wind came from when or after it snowed. Look at the bird's-eye view of the snowfence. The straight or almost-straight arrows show where wind goes fastest. The arrows that are curved show a wind eddy. The wind eddy shows where a snow drift will be. Is the snow highest behind the snowfence or in front of the snowfence? How do you think a snowfence helps keep snow off of a road?

- Look at snowdrifts around tree trunks. The most snow is found where there are wind eddies. The least snow is found where the wind blows fastest. Where is the most snow around a tree? Why?
- Sometimes there is a snowdrift around a building. If there is a snowdrift by a building, was the wind that left the snow there going fast or slow?



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For Further Reading

Silent Spring

Rachel Carson 1994

Landmark book first published in 1962. Led to ban of DDT and brought about changes in laws protecting the environment.

Wildflowers and Winter Weeds

Lauren Brown 1997

Winter guide to 135 common wildflower and weed species of the northeastern United States. Excellent illustrations. Re-issue of *Weeds in Winter* (1976) by same author/illustrator.

Just Weeds: History, Myth and Uses

Pamela Jones 1991

Covers common and botanical names, features, habitat, history, myths, folklore and applications of 30 common wild plants found worldwide. Full color line drawings.

Prairie Conservation: Preserving North America's Most Endangered Ecosystem

Editors Fred B. Samson and Fritz L. Knopf 1996

In-depth examination of history, ecology and current status of prairies. Focuses on increasing awareness, knowledge and understanding of this unique ecosystem.

For Children

Rachel Carson: The Wonder of Nature

Catherine Reef 1996

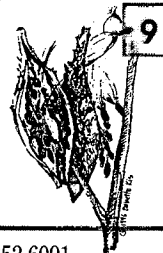
Biography of scientist/writer who sounded the alarm about pesticide use. One of the books in the Earth Keepers series.

Growing Wild: Inviting Wildlife into Your Yard

Constance Perenyi 1991

Young children learn how creatures thrive when the 'perfect lawn' is transformed into welcoming habitat.

—MaryAnn Maki, Schlitz Audubon Center



On-site bioengineering

At first glance, you might deem this scraggly Box Elder an eyesore, but I view it as a wonderful resource. It anchors our fence and keeps it true during the fiercest of winds, and its many cavities act as inviting foyers to birds. However, it is the renewable stick supply of this fast-growing, all-too-common native tree that makes it especially valuable to me. It resprouts with supple 3- to 6-foot-long branches each year. I'll be fashioning gates from this year's harvest.

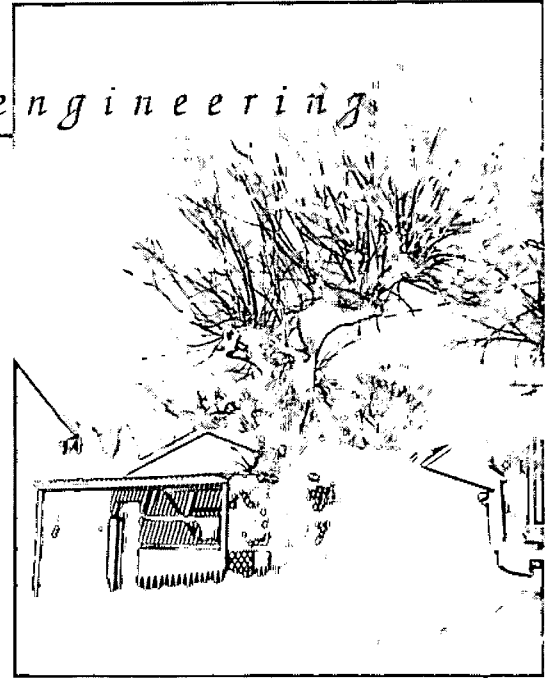
Well-engineered wattle fences are strong enough to contain livestock and charming enough to earn compliments.

The trellis below has survived for four years without needing any replacement sticks. The bases of the sticks are simply pushed into the ground and the tops are secured with outdoor-quality twist-tie wires.

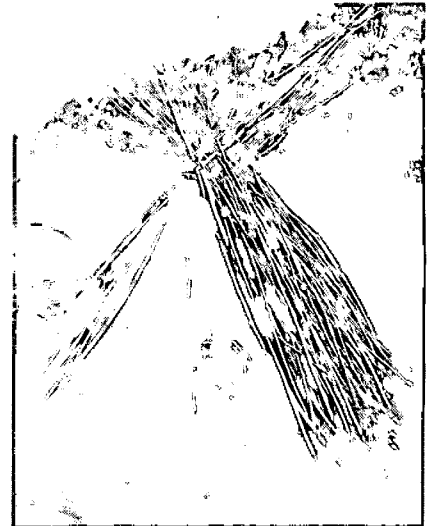
Don't forget to look at your property through the eyes of a child. Is it diverse, exciting and filled with different habitats?
—Carol Henderson

STICKS

*Box Elder
(aka Acer
negundo
or Ashleaf
Maple)*



A stick tepee is a shady retreat for dog Rainy or a playhouse for visiting children. This is a nice way to store the sticks until you're ready to use them.



Perhaps the most beneficial stick structure one could build would be a brushpile refuge for birds. Its value as a habitat can be expanded by connecting it to a pond for amphibian and reptile use. A base of stones or logs helps to stabilize the branches, preventing their collapse.

I've watched a dozen small birds hold tight inside our brushpile as a hawk hopped across and yanked at the surface of tangled stems. Unable to navigate the labyrinth, the hawk lashed at the pile for several minutes, hoping to frighten its occupants into flight. He finally admitted defeat and went to hunt elsewhere. After a short time, each little bird popped up from the depths of its sanctuary, very much like bread from a toaster. *ea*

—Joy Buslaff



Box Elder is a member of the maple family, and syrup can be made from its sap.



STAGHORN SUMAC

(*Rhus typhina*)

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

Staghorn Sumac, with their beautiful feather-like green summer leaves, red and burgundy autumn leaves and plentiful, persistent red fruit, brighten any season's landscape.

Characteristics: Staghorn Sumac is no stranger to the Midwestern landscape. These hardy shrubs grow quickly, spreading by rhizomes, and are often seen growing in large clumps. Feather-like leaves and cone-shaped fruit clusters provide visual interest. This plant tolerates a wide variety of soils, ranging from sandy to clayey. Native Americans used sumac fruits for tea and dye-making. Today, outdoor science classes often include an exercise in making sumac lemonade from the fruits.

This Plant Needs: Sumac tolerates a variety of soil and water conditions, but must have sunlight if it is to survive. Often Staghorn Sumac is found on sunny hill-sides with well-drained soil. These hardy plants take conditions as cold as Zone 3. If you wish to limit sumac's spread, plant a few pines around the east, north and west sides of your shrubs and keep vegetation to the south cut short.

Who Benefits: When looking for bluebirds, chickadees, nuthatches and woodpeckers this time of year, your first glance should be towards the sumac. The

birds certainly look for the plentiful red fruit, but also discover insects tucked away in the dense, cone-like fruit clusters. Ninety-seven species of birds are known to enjoy sumac fruit. During the nesting season, Robins and catbirds nest in these shrubs. In fall and early winter, one of our areas smallest owls, the Saw-whet Owl, often takes refuge in the branches. You may literally walk within inches of these owls without causing them to take flight. Butterflies and other summer insects enjoy the nectar of the sumac flowers. Visually, there is not much that compares to the sight of stands of these plants along county roads in autumn.

Companion Plants: An ideal combination for wildlife would be an area including some Gray Dogwood, American Elderberry and serviceberry along with Staghorn Sumac. This arrangement of fruit-producing shrubs would be sure to make the area a hot-spot during all seasons. 🍁

This column is written by Steve Mahler, owner of The Wild Bird Center, Menomonee Falls, WI. Steve welcomes your comments at 414-255-9955.

Editor's Note: Sumac spreads readily, and should be planted in locations where there is space for it.

*The whole marvelous panorama of life that spreads over the surface of our globe is, in the last analysis, transformed sunlight.
—Ernst Haeckel*

The Front Forty...

Recently I read a book called Grasslands by Richard Manning. He writes about the history and politics of the American grasslands west of the Mississippi. Although the book bogs down in places, I would recommend that you continue trudging through the dull spots because the good parts make it well worth your while.

I had only one bone to pick with Mr. Manning and that is the part where he stated that only the large ranches can turn around the native prairie and bring it back to where it belongs. He says that while it is nice what we homeowners are doing, we can not make a real difference. I feel that we can make a very

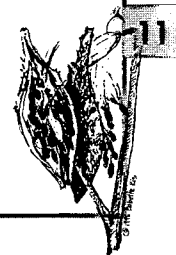
big difference with every square foot of land that we convert to native plantings. I am aware that I can't grow a prairie; however, I can help to save some of its plants from extinction. When we put the efforts of all Wild Ones and those of other native plant societies together, I think that Mr. Manning might be rather surprised to find that every little bit helps. 🍁

—Judy Crane

Food for Thought

It's not just what we do, but the things that we don't do, such as excessive watering, mowing and use of chemicals, that make a big difference in our environment.

—jc



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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.

Chapter News

New Prairie Potholes chapter formed in Minnesota. Mark your calendars for January 24, 1998, 10 am to noon as we kick off the first meeting for the Minnesota Chapter of Wild Ones! Meetings will be held every fourth Saturday of the month at Green Lake Environmental Learning Center in Spicer, Minnesota. For directions, or if you have questions, please contact Laura Jasper at (320) 796-2181.

McHenry Natural Landscaping Seminar

The 1998 Natural Landscaping Seminar, sponsored by the Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee of the McHenry County Defenders and cosponsored by McHenry County College and McHenry County Conservation District, will be held Saturday, February 28, in the conference center of McHenry County College. Cost of registration, including lunch, is \$25. For more information, call the McHenry County Defenders at (815) 338-0393.



The meeting place

ILLINOIS

LAKE-TO-PRAIRIE CHAPTER

Programs are Tuesdays at 7:15pm in the Byron Colby Community Barn at Prairie Crossing, Grayslake, IL. (Rt. 45 just south of IL 120). Visitors welcome. For information call Karin Wisol (847) 548-1650.

January 13—Peter Winkler, environmental consultant and teacher at College of Lake County, presents "Fire Ecology and Managing Preserved Natural Areas in Suburban Settings."

February 10—"Prairie Ecology and Plant Propagation from Seed" will be presented by Robert Ahrenhoester, owner of Prairie Seed Source near Milwaukee, teacher and natural landscaping pioneer.

GREATER DuPAGE CHAPTER

Chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at the College of DuPage, unless otherwise noted. Call (630) 415-IDIG for more info.

January 15—"History of Man's Interaction With Nature" presented by Vicki Nowicki. College of DuPage, Building K, Rm 161. 7pm.

February 19—Panel discussion of six wild perspectives. Rm M 165G. 7pm.

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.

January 15—Assembling seed screens and bluebird houses. Cost \$6 per screen set, \$5 per bluebird house. Jarrett Nature Center. 6:30pm.

February 19—Spring Fever slide show: "Our Prairie Birds, Wildflowers and Prairie Fire" presented by Sally Baumgarten. Jarrett Nature Center. 6:30pm.

KANSAS

Chapter meets monthly. 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.

OKLAHOMA

Meetings are held on the last Saturday of the month at 10am, Stillwater Public Library, Rm 138, unless otherwise noted.

January 24—"Medicinal Properties of Natives." presented by Linda Fisher. Oklahoma State University, Colvin Center. 10am.

February 28—Annual meeting followed by "A Look at Oklahoma Past and Present." Guest speaker Carl Hesser. Oklahoma State University, Colvin Center. 10am.

MICHIGAN

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

MINNESOTA

PRAIRIE POTHOLE CHAPTER

Meetings will be held the fourth Saturday of the month at Green Lake Environmental Learning Center in Spicer, Minnesota. For directions, or information, please contact Laura Jasper at (320) 796-2181.

January 24—"The first meeting of the Minnesota chapter of the Wild Ones! 10am.

WISCONSIN

FOX VALLEY AREA CHAPTER

Meetings are held at the UW-Extension office, 625 E. County Rd. Y, Oshkosh, at 7pm, unless otherwise noted.

January 31—All-day natural landscaping conference, "Toward Harmony with Nature II" featuring expert guest speakers, exhibitors, vendors, entertainment and networking opportunities. Oshkosh Convention Center.

February 26—Annual meeting, seed exchange and program: "Wild flowers on our State's Highways, Past, Present & Future." Speakers are Dick Stark, WI DOT landscape architect, and Carol Catlin.

GREEN BAY CHAPTER

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

MADISON CHAPTER

Meetings held at McKay Center in UW Arboretum, 7pm on last Thursday of the month unless otherwise noted.

January 29—"Seed Starting." Bring your own seeds, we'll provide the soil and pots. Laura Brownwill is presenter.

February 26—"Burning Your Prairie." Learn the basics of burning your prairie.

MENOMONEE RIVER AREA CHAPTER

For more info on monthly meeting call Judy Crane at 251-2185. Meetings are held at the Menomonee Falls Community Center at W152 N8684 Margaret Rd., Menomonee Falls. 6:30pm unless otherwise noted.

January 21—"Milwaukee County/Waukesha County Prairie History—Was There One?" Randy Powers is speaker.

February 18—"Prairie" Bob Ahrenhoester will be speaking on SE Wisconsin prairie plants. Find out what's native in your area.

MILWAUKEE—NORTH CHAPTER

Meetings held at Schlitz Audubon Center, 1111 E. Brown Deer Rd., Bayside, second Saturday of the month, 9:30am, unless otherwise noted.

January 10—Karl Shroeder, naturalist, botanist and activist will speak about natural landscape design.

February 14—Richard Barloga will share his slides and expertise with us.

MILWAUKEE—WEHR CHAPTER

Meetings held at Wehr Nature Center, 9701 West College Ave., Franklin, second Saturday of the month, 1:30pm, unless otherwise noted.

January 10—Karl Shroeder, naturalist, botanist and activist will speak about natural landscape design.

February 14—Richard Barloga will share his slides and expertise with us. New Berlin Library, 5885 S. 116th st. 1:30pm.

NATURE CALENDAR

January through February

When and Where

Event

Days, along roadsides

Red-tailed Hawks catch Meadow Voles and mice

Suburbs, after snowfall

Look for fox, rabbit and skunk tracks in the snow

Days, dawn and dusk

Rabbits gnaw red-twig dogwood, pussywillow and witchhazel branches

Snowmelt, grassy areas

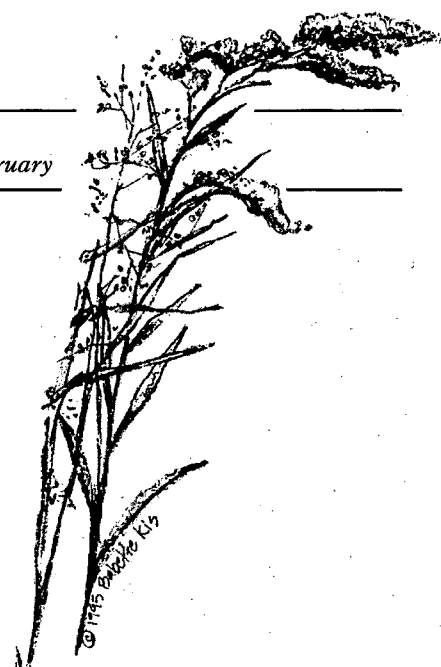
Find Meadow Vole runways, houses and seed piles

Sugar and silver maples

Gray Squirrels gnaw bark from branches and lick flowing sap

Marshes, end of February

Red-winged Blackbirds begin their return to northern nesting grounds



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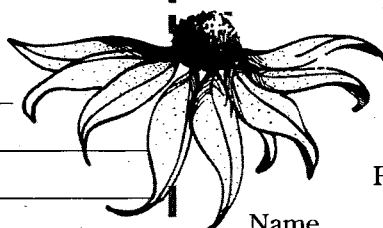
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JOY BUSLAFF, EDITOR/DESIGNER

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CHAPTER CONTACTS

ILLINOIS
GREATER DuPAGE
(630) 415-IDIG

ROCK RIVER VALLEY
MARY ANNE
MATHWICH
(815) 332-4367

NE ILL./SE WIS.
LAKE-TO-PRAIRIE
KARIN WISOL
(847) 548-1650

KANSAS
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