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**SPECIAL ISSUE:
 Stories from
 Members**

A VOICE FOR THE NATURAL LANDSCAPING MOVEMENT

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1999 • VOLUME 12, NO. 1

Wild Ones® Journal

GROW WILD!

Sometimes I wonder whether there isn't a contradiction at the heart of gardening's pleasure. In the place where we celebrate solitude, where we find solace in being alone with our thoughts and the dirt, we are, in fact, deeply connected with the world around us (for some of us, perhaps more so than at any other time or during any other activity). In the garden, we are active participants, equal partners in the give and take of connection.

If there's one theme to this book, it is that while our connection with the earth may find a wonderful, healing expression in our native-plant gardens, the process doesn't stop there. Connection is intricate, not simply two-way; alliances forged lead

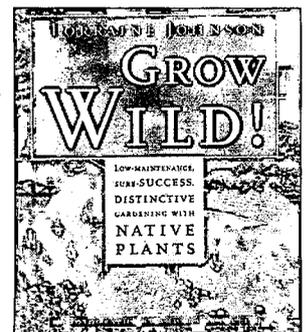
outward to other connections, other alliances, other possibilities of communion. And, to my mind, the healing promise of native-plant gardening is that it encourages us to look at the landscapes around us in a new way. When we're deep in the dirt trying to bring a small patch of Butterfly Weed to flower, we may ask ourselves where other patches of Butterfly Weed might be. And increasingly in North America, simply asking such questions leads to associated issues of habitat health, endangered species and spaces and on and on in an alarming catalog of losses.

Awareness leads to action. Our native-plant gardens themselves are a first healing step, but the challenge is to take that healing vision, harness the restorative promise and extend it to the whole landscape of home, whether one conceives of that home as local, bioregional, continental or global—or, indeed, as all of these.

If garden-
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 the world
 seems hope-
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 or simply
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 the solitary
 gardener to

shoulder, look again at the accumulated wisdom of the gardeners and at the beauty of their gardens [*Grow Wild! is stunningly illustrated—Ed.*]. Each gardener has forged a healing connection with the land and nurtured local growth in such a way that it is revealed as possible for all of us. These gardeners don't necessarily have unusual resources—unless, of course, one views curiosity, spunk, creativity and willingness to experiment as unusual commodities. No, they've simply started with the conditions at hand,

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GROW WILD!

(continued from front page)

explored the local possibilities and worked from the ground up.

As Wallace Stegner wrote: "Wilderness can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, a part of the geography of hope." I would say that native-plant gardening fits into this idea as part of the geography of hope in action. Every gardener will interpret 'wilderness' or 'wilderness' in his or her own way. For some, it may be the incorporation of a few wildflowers in an essentially exotic garden; for others, it may be the full restoration of a functioning native-plant community. The important thing is to connect with that wildness and to feel it as part of oneself, to feel as 'at home' in the garden as the butterfly searching for nectar, the bird searching for seed, the earthworm turning the soil.

* * *

While walking in the woodland wildflower garden at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania, I overheard a couple talking as they gazed at the Foamflower.

"We could put that beside the house," she said. "You know what's funny," he said with a catch in his voice, the surprise of connection sneaking up on him. "I grew up with

that in the woods beside my house."

A healing embrace of home and a sense of our place within it—that's where the path of native-plant gardening leads.

* * *

In some ways, Perle Olsson's prairie garden is a lesson in the staying power of sneaky encroachment. Her 2 ½ acres (1 hectare) began life as a lawn, and her husband, Karl, liked it that way. "There was no way in the world he was going to plow up his lawn, so I just kept taking out more and more." Bit by bit, Perle dug out patches and planted prairie seeds and plugs. In other places, she planted directly into the lawn. (Perle confesses to "hot arguments about mowing.") But slowly, inexorably, the prairie plants took hold, then spread their seeds, and now, the land is wholeheartedly, stunningly tallgrass prairie.

Now, Perle's garden is a showcase for garden clubs, college classes and groups of neighborhood schoolchildren who come to visit and learn about the native landscape.

At first, Perle confesses, her efforts looked "insane"—all those holes in the lawn, Purple Coneflowers in the Bluegrass. But she was "renewed and inspired" every time she looked at the Purple Cone-

flowers. "Look at their legacy," she says. "They've spread all over. The prairie plants have overcome the Bluegrass, even in place where I didn't pull out the lawn grass."

* * *

Recently, there's been quite an upsurge of interest in 'theme' gardens that attract butterflies or hummingbirds or other creatures. I chuckle each time a nursery catalog offers such kits. Quite simply, if you want to attract native butterflies and birds to your garden, spend your pennies on native plants, not on contraptions and potions.

With native-plant gardening, we become what the bioregional philosophers call dwellers in the land—partners, not parasites; participants, not parallel players; dwellers, not dictators. ☞

Note: Lorraine Johnson is this year's keynote speaker in Milwaukee (details below) and president of the North American Native Plant Society (previously known as the Canadian Wildflower Society) which publishes Wildflower Magazine (Lorrie Otto and Bret Rappaport are among its field editors). U.S. membership/subscription is \$35/year from Box 336, Postal Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L7, Canada. Visit their web site at: acorn-online.com/hedge/cws.html

Fox Valley Area Chapter: Toward Harmony with Nature III Saturday, Jan. 23

Programs—Bob Ahrenhoerster: "Prairie Restoration for Beginners," Mike Yanny: "Propagation of Native Trees And Shrubs" and "Wisconsin Native Trees And Shrubs," Dr. Ken Solis: "Escalating The Fights Against Invasive Weeds in Your Neighborhood," Jim Ruwaldt: "U.S. Government Conservation Programs for Rural Landowners," Molly Fifield Murray: "How to Create A School Natural Area" and "Curriculum Development for School Natural Areas," Arlene Kaufman: "Using Native Plants for Butterfly Gardening," Paul Samerdyke: "Wetland Restoration on Private or Public Lands," keynote speaker Bill Tishler: "Jens Jensen: A Natural History." Besides a bounty of exhibitors, this year there will be a Silent Auction and CEU credits available for teachers.

Park Plaza Convention Centre, One North Main, Oshkosh, WI 54903 • Pre-registration: \$20—At the door: \$25
Call Carol for a conference brochure: 920-233-4853 or email: WORESOURCE@aol.com
or write to: Fox Valley Area Wild Ones, P.O. Box 2103, Appleton, WI 54913-2103

Milwaukee Audubon Society Natural Landscaping Conference Saturday, Feb. 20

THE CONFERENCE THAT STARTED IT ALL! Programs—Janice Stiefel: "Butterflies And Moths," Bret Rappaport: "How We Created Our Schoolyard Habitat," Lorrie Otto: "How to Construct A Woodland Outdoor Classroom," Wendy Walcott: "Beyond Purple Coneflowers, Adding Diversity to A Native Plant Landscape," Joyce Powers: "Creating A Prairie," Darrell Kromm: "Native Trees And Shrubs," Kelly Kearns: "Invasives," Don Vorpahl: "Designing Native Landscapes for Small Urban Yards," Steve Mahler, "Creating A Native Landscape for Birds And Other Wildlife," Annette Alexander: "Landscaping Wet Areas And Small Ponds," David Kopitzke: "Growing Native Plants from Seed And Division," Jim Uhrinak: "Using Native Trees And Shrubs," Randy Powers and Neil Diboll: "How to Get Started with Using Native Plants in Your Landscaping," Clyde Wallenfang: "A Composting Primer," Dr. John Harrington: "Landscaping A Wooded Yard with Native Plants," keynote speaker Lorraine Johnson author of Grow Wild! Plenty of exhibitors plus two Q&A sessions for you to ask one-on-one questions of the experts.

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Wisconsin Room. Call for registration form or more info: 414-375-1565, M-F 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
or write to: Milwaukee Audubon Society, W61 N620A Mequon Ave., Cedarburg, WI 53012.

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.

The meeting place

"The old trees have recorded another year, letting out their tough bark girdles to accommodate the new layer of muscle and adipose."

—Edith M. Thomas, from *The Round Year*, 1886



ILLINOIS

GREATER DuPAGE CHAPTER

Chapter meets the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the College of DuPage, unless otherwise noted. Call (630) 415-IDIG for info.

JAN. 21—Check hotline for location. Randy Korb from *Biophilia in Wisconsin* will lecture about the Monarch butterfly.

FEB. 18—Check hotline for location. Laura Evans from the USEPA in Chicago discusses "Native Landscaping Tool Kit for Public Officials" to help us make public officials more pro-natural landscaping.

LAKE-TO-PRAIRIE CHAPTER

Programs are held Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m. in the Byron Colby Community Barn at Prairie Crossing, Grayslake (Rt. 45 just south of Ill. 120). Visitors welcome. Call Karin Wisioł for info, (847) 548-1650.

NORTH PARK CHAPTER

Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the North Park Nature Center, 5801 N. Pulaski, Chicago, unless otherwise indicated.

JAN. 14—"Safeguarding Our Natural Heritage" presented by Jerry Sullivan, author of *Chicago Wilderness, An Atlas of Biodiversity and other works*.

FEB. 11—Doug Taron, curator of biology for the *Chicago Academy of Sciences*, discusses the wonderful world of lepidoptera (butterflies).

ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER

Meetings held at Jarrett Prairie Center, Byron Forest Preserve, 7993 N. River Rd., Byron, unless otherwise noted. Call (815) 234-8535 for info.

JAN. 21—7 p.m. Build bluebird houses and suet feeders.

FEB. 18—7 p.m. "Planting A Prairie for The Home Landscape" presented by Mary Anne Mathwich.

KANSAS

Chapter meets monthly. Call Michael S. Almon for info, (785) 832-1300.

KENTUCKY

FRANKFORT CHAPTER

Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 5:30 at Franklin County Extension office unless otherwise noted. Call Katie Clark at (502) 226-4766 or e-mail herbs@kih.net for info.

MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR CHAPTER

Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month. Call Dave Mindell for info, (734) 665-7168 or plantwise@aol.com.

JAN. 18—7:30 p.m. *Matthaei Botanical Gardens*, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd. Note nonstandard meeting day! Joint meeting with Michigan Botanical Club: Prof. Burt Barnes speaks about species common to Michigan and China and the apparent and genetic differences between them.

FEB. 10—7:30 p.m. Pioneer High School, 601 W. Stadium. "Managing Weeds in Your Home Landscape."

MINNESOTA

OTTER TAIL CHAPTER

Meetings are held at the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center, 7 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Call Tim Bodeen for info, (320) 739-9334.

JAN. 25—Chapter's annual meeting and election of officers.

OHIO

COLUMBUS CHAPTER

Meetings are held the second Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. at Inniswood Metro Gardens, Innis House, 940 Hempstead Rd., Westerville, unless otherwise noted. Call Martha Preston for info, (614) 263-9468.

OKLAHOMA

COYLE CHAPTER

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

WISCONSIN

FOX VALLEY AREA CHAPTER

Meetings are held at UW-Extension office, 625 E. Cnty Rd. Y, Oshkosh, 7 p.m., unless otherwise noted.

Jan. 23—See "Toward Harmony with Nature III" information on preceding page.

GREEN BAY CHAPTER

Meetings are held at the Green Bay Botanical Gardens, 7 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Call Julie Macier for info, (920) 465-4759.

MADISON CHAPTER

Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month at Arboretum McKay Center, 7 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Public is welcome. Call Joe Powelka for more info, (608) 837-6308.

MENOMONEE RIVER AREA CHAPTER

Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. at Gloria Del Lutheran Church, W180 N7863 Town Hall Rd., Menomonee Falls. Call Judy Crane for info, (414) 251-2185.

JAN. 19—Betty Braun shares slides and info re: butterflies and native wildflowers.

FEB. 16—Richard Barloga discusses native plant communities of SE Wisconsin.

MILWAUKEE—NORTH CHAPTER

Meetings are held at the Schlitz Audubon Center, 1111 E. Brown Deer Rd., Bayside, second Saturday of the month, 9:30 a.m., unless otherwise noted. Call voice mail message center at (414) 299-9888.

JAN. 9—Mariette Nowak, former Wehr Nature Center director, discusses "My Yard, My Canvas, My Celebration—The Joys of Natural Landscaping."

FEB. 13—Wendy Walcott presents "Beyond Purple Coneflowers, Adding Diversity to A Native Plant Landscape."

MILWAUKEE—WEHR CHAPTER

Meetings are held at the Wehr Nature Center, second Saturday of the month, 1:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Call voice mail message center at (414) 299-9888.

JAN. 9—Same program as North Chapter above.

FEB. 13—Note that this meeting will be held at the Hales Corners Library, not at the nature center! Same program as North Chapter above.

THANK YOU! The Milwaukee-Wehr Chapter has generously sponsored the editing and design costs for this issue of the *Wild Ones Journal*, in effect relieving our national treasury of those production costs. The Wehr Chapter's funds were raised, in part, through fern and totebag sales. Chapter President Judy Connelly challenges other chapters to donate their profits to worthy Wild Ones' projects.

ONE STEP FORWARD

I began our school prairie project several years ago with the creation of a small prairie and lots of planning. The actual planting of our large prairie (40 x 120 feet) took place May 4, 1998. Elementary students put 2,800 plants into mostly sand. There are 70 species of forbs and eight species of grasses; 58 percent forbs to 42 percent grasses.

Four of our forb species are on Wisconsin's threatened/endangered list. There are woodchip paths, Aldo Leopold benches (built by the middle schoolers), a birdbath and a rain gauge. It is amazing how quickly birds, insects, butterflies and toads moved in. This outdoor classroom is like a magnet for students at recess.

My grant also allowed for the purchase of 30 different-titled books relating to prairies, for the elementary school library. The prairie is incorporated into many areas of the curriculum at all grade levels. It has been certified a *Schoolyard Habitat* by the National Wildlife Federation, which means it is in harmony with nature. A Wild Ones sign is proudly displayed, with a school membership in the Madison, Wis., chapter (so the *Wild Ones Journal* goes into the school library).

—Kim Lowman Vollmer,
Clinton Elementary School, Clinton, Wis.

TWO STEPS BACK

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL—They paved Lorrie Otto's paradise at Bayside Middle School and quite literally, though non-lyrically, put up a parking lot.

...To understand the rise and fall of the Bayside Middle School natural area, begin on May 7, 1974. That's when Otto shepherded a group of schoolchildren in an attempt to establish a small meadow next to the school.

"It was around Earth Day and the principal had the kids picking up litter," Otto says. "I thought, 'How dumb. Could you think of a better way to turn children away from nature than having them pick up garbage?'"

...The area was expanded later to encompass a small prairie restoration and 14 trees, including Shagbark Hickory and Blue Ash, for a woodland....Otto spent \$3,000 of her own money to establish the tiny woods.

...But last fall, when residents voted to spend \$3.75 million to expand and renovate the aging school building, the future of the natural area was cast in doubt.

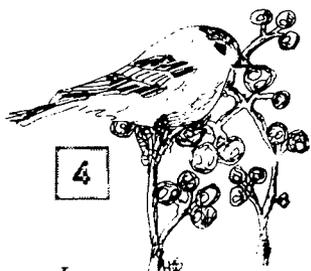
Ultimately, the trees fell and the prairie was graded. A certain amount of finger-pointing blurs the story. Some promises were broken, some say other plans should have been made, some blame a subcontractor for making mistakes—the subcontractor was angered by headlines that he was to blame when he insists he was following orders. But nothing changes what has been done. A vintage site, a 24-year investment, is gone.

If the value of an outdoor environmental classroom were clearly understood in our culture—by parents and school boards and construction workers—this wouldn't have happened. The onus of opening our fellow citizens' eyes rests on us. We must find the right formula of words to

defend such riches. (And then perhaps we should still build fences around our plantings.) Following are excerpts of letters sent to Bayside area newspapers and school officials.

—Joy Buslaff

Below: Kim's class poses for this historical day-of-planting photo, May 4, 1998. Kim wrote to Lorrie Otto: "You were my inspiration for this project. I hope that some day our school project looks as beautiful as Bayside's."



Lucy Schumann's goldfinch drawing reminds us why we plant natives that bear fruit, nut and seed.



"You had perhaps the first schoolyard landscape natural area in the nation. It should have been a source of pride." —Richard Barloga, naturalist

Our children deserve far more than was afforded them in the Bayside case. Indeed, all of us need and deserve more than the ubiquitous backhoe, blacktop, and bluegrass landscapes of our contemporary world. —Donald Vorpahl

I am writing not only for myself but my three children—all of whom attended Bayside School in the '70s and early '80s and one of whom helped to plant the garden—to say that we are greatly saddened by its loss. —Carol Tennesen

As a concerned citizen and Bayside taxpayer I am incensed that Bayside School's natural area has been destroyed after years of love, labor, money, spirit, and expertise.

...Environmental education is becoming ever more important in a world with more toxins each year. Here in Bayside we have ever less biodiversity despite many of our citizens' efforts to the contrary. —Steven Ulrich, M.D.

The children lost a treasure of environmental custodianship, a learning of true value, conservation for beauty and health, and a bond of respect for those who created this garden. —Joan Robertson

It is very unfortunate the school district failed to recognize these efforts and placed so little value on the work and dollars spent by the volunteers in establishing the prairie communities. —Scott D. Prill

Is the Board aware that just one of the plants in that little plot of land sells for \$4 at Bayside Garden Center? Four dollars multiplied by thousands of beautiful plants in that plot are now under asphalt! —Dick Linhart

The natural area at Bayside Middle School has been a model for outdoor classrooms in many other schools across the Midwest. ...These actions, poor communication and planning show a shameful disregard for the work done by Lorrie Otto, teachers, students and community volunteers. —Dr. Mark K. Chelmowski

This project may well have been one of the first examples of such sites for learning, which is now state-mandated into the curriculum. How fortunate that many children benefited from Lorrie Otto's vision and personal investment of time, money and encouragement.

How tragic that it is all gone. What were these people thinking? —Mandy Ploch



To draw, to dream, to touch, to listen, to smell, to learn about history, food, medicine, and all the other workings of the universe—what better place than school where all children should find equal opportunity? However, this Bayside schoolyard has been blacktopped.

"A WEALTH OF EDUCATION"

Landscaping with native plants around schools is a growing trend because it provides a wealth of educational opportunities for students. Among these are:

- Seeing and handling plants used regularly by Native Americans and settlers for food, medicine, and clothing fibers
 - Observing directly the intimate interrelationships between plants and animals, e.g. the insects required to pollinate certain flowers before seeds can be produced; the songbirds that feed on nutrient-rich wild plant seeds to provide energy for spring and fall migrations
 - Having firsthand exposure to the natural life forms that inspired such artists, biologists and writers as Aldo Leopold, John Muir, August Derleth, Frank Lloyd Wright and Georgia O'Keefe
 - Understanding through daily inspection why some plants are common and others are rare and how plants move from place to place with help from animals and wind
 - Experimenting year-round on ecological principles
- The staff of the Department of Natural Resources' Bureau of Endangered Resources is often contacted by schools. We strongly support landscaping with native plants as an essential element of environmental education.

I hope that the destruction of the native planting at Bayside Middle School can be partially rectified by the establishment of a replacement planting so that new students attending this school will have the same excellent educational opportunities that past students have enjoyed.

—David Kopitzke

Wisconsin Bureau of Endangered Resources

What I did on my summer vacation

QUESTION: What does a Wild Ones/Prairie Enthusiast member do on vacation?
ANSWER: Leave his/her own wild yard behind and visit prairies, of course!

PRAIRIE PIG-OUT

In summer 1998 Bob and I drove west to visit our kids in Missoula, Mont. It was the height of the season and we managed to visit six prairies on the way west and back. How did we find these prairies? Many natural landscaping books and periodicals have lists of them. If you decide to visit some of these or other native plantscapes on your travels, be sure to call ahead, if possible, to get maps, directions, brochures, etc.

But for now, put on your sunscreen and off we go on our sampling of prairies small and large, urban and ultra-rural:

Saturday, July 25

Left home for our first stop, the annual picnic of the **Prairie Enthusiasts** in south central Wisconsin. This group is dedicated to protecting, managing, and restoring native prairies and savannas in the upper Midwest. *Dues \$25/family. You can either join a chapter or be an at-large member. Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 112, Boscobel, WI 53805.*

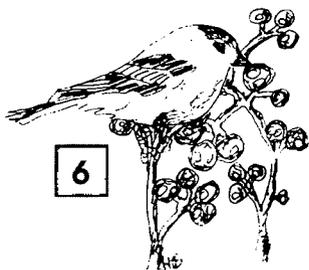
Sunday, July 26

Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge, billed in their brochure as "the largest prairie reconstruction in the world!" Eight miles south of I-80, just east of Des Moines, Iowa. At 5,000 acres, they're well on their way to their targeted 8,600 acres of prairie restoration. Prairie plantings are only two years old; Bur Oak savanna restoration is just beginning. Herd of 40 bison and four elk in adjoining enclosure. At the Prairie Learning Center toddlers, baggy-pants teenagers, young parents, and golden-agers were engrossed in the hands-on exhibits. You can even go 'underground' and see what a pocket gopher habitat looks

like. *Walnut Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Box 399, Prairie City, IA 50228-0399; (515) 994-3400; <http://www.fws.gov/~r3pao/walnut/>*

Sunday, p.m.

Willa Cather Memorial Garden. This berm of native forbs and grasses behind Love Library on the U of Nebraska campus on R Street in Lincoln is



a small but fitting tribute to Cather, who wrote in *My Antonia*: "As I looked about me I felt that the grass was the country, as the water is the sea. The red of the grass made all the great prairie the colour of wine stains, or of certain seaweeds when they are first washed up. And there was so much motion in it; the country seemed, somehow, to be running."

Monday, July 27

Nine-Mile Prairie, the 200-acre virgin tallgrass research site of the late ecologist and author J.E. Weaver on the northwestern outskirts of Lincoln. We saw Poppy Mallow, Bush Clover, White Prairie Clover, Stiff Goldenrod, Leadplant, lush native grasses, and the handsome deep purple blossoms of Nebraska's native Ironweed. *University of Nebraska, (402) 472-2971.*

Monday, p.m.

Visited original Pony Express Station and Sod House sites near the Interstate in Gothenburg, Neb. The latter bears witness to the fortitude of prairie sodbusters like my great-grandparents who, as newlyweds in 1885, trekked west from Iowa to prove up a claim on the northwestern Nebraska prairie. They camped under their oxen wagon 'til they got their sod house built. After six years of summer droughts and winter blizzards, they sold their claim, packed up their baby (my grandmother) and returned to the fertile soils and more abundant precipitation of Iowa.

July 28-August 3

Missoula, Mont. The native grass mixture in our son and wife's new lawn is thriving without the nightly watering needed by their neighbors' bluegrass lawns. The native Mountain Penstemons and Blazingstars we planted two summers ago are not at all fazed by the hot, dry conditions along their back alley. Also doing fine: the native plants I helped plant in summer 1997 as an open house visitor to Missoula's new demonstration "Waterwise Garden" downtown along the Clark Fork River.

Tuesday, August 4

Homeward bound. Camped overnight in **Theodore Roosevelt National Park** near Medora, N.D. To my eyes, this shortgrass prairie in the Northern Badlands is as beautiful as any of our national parks.

Wednesday, August 5

Cross Ranch Nature Preserve, N.D. Lewis referred in his diary to this "handsome high prairie" after he and Clark camped here or very nearby in 1804. Many species remain or have returned since this ranch on the mixed grass (midheight and shortgrass) prairie was purchased by the Nature Conservancy in 1982. Forbs are about one-

third the height of ours in Wisconsin due to less precip. A hike on the two-mile nature trail captures the sense of remoteness, openness, and rolling topography of the prairielands. *Twenty-nine miles north of Mandan on ND Highway 1806. The Nature Conservancy (701) 794-8741.*

Thursday, August 6

Sheyenne National Grasslands, N.D. These 70,200 acres of tallgrass and savannas, still being grazed on a rotation basis, have 850 of North Dakota's 1,250 native forbs and grasses. The brochure invites you to "come walk where Greater Prairie Chickens, remnants of tall-grass prairie, Bur Oak savannas, and rare plants beckon you to explore North Dakota's plains and rolling hills." There is no actual trail; you just follow posts across country from the trailhead. *East of Lisbon, N.D. Brochure and maps from U.S. Forest Service, Main St. P.O. Box 946, Lisbon, ND 58054; (701) 683-4342.*

Thursday, p.m.

Bennett-Johnson Prairie at Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chanhassen, Minn. Twenty-acre prairie and savanna restoration begun in 1965. No bison or elk, but a plantscape you could work toward in your own yard. *Intersection of Hwys 41 and 5 southwest of Minneapolis. (612) 443-2460.*

Friday, August 7

The roadside Big Bluestem, Flowering Spurge, Sunflowers, and late-flowering Bergamot along Wisconsin Highway 21 en route home all look tall to us after being out west.

Friday, p.m.

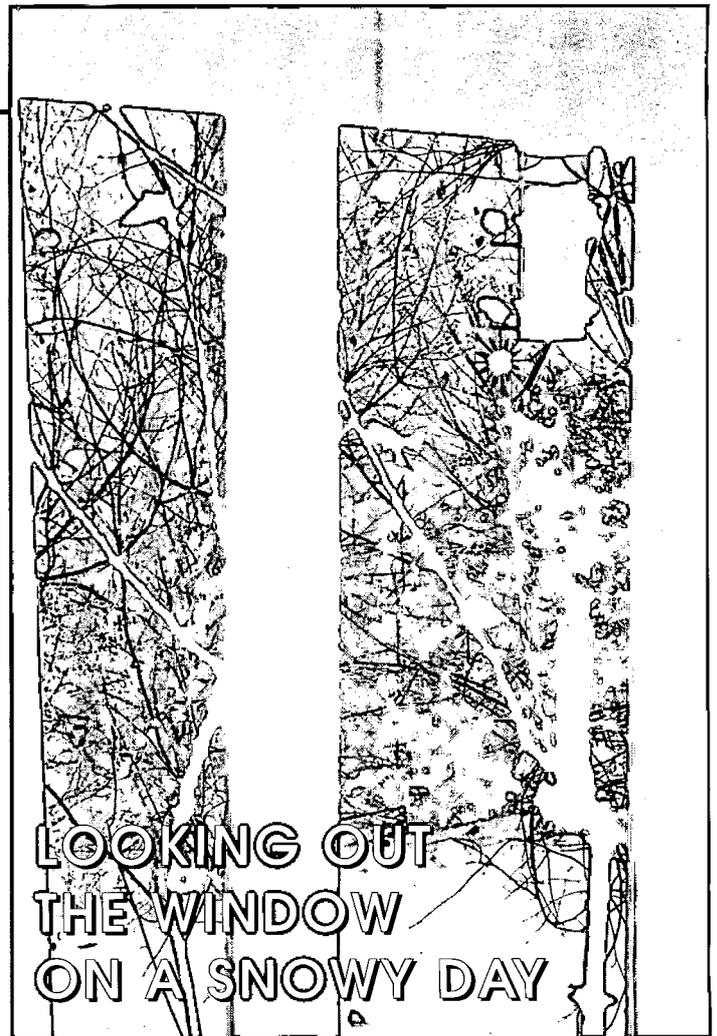
Back at home, many forbs in our own prairie garden are past their peak, but grasses, Asters and Stiff Goldenrods are still on tap. Best of all, no maintenance is needed, in contrast to our vegetable, perennial, and herb gardens that got weedy and overgrown while we were gone.

Saturday, August 8

Still more prairie landscapes to enjoy—All-day annual meeting of national Wild Ones at Prairie Crossing, Ill.

Was our vacation relaxing? No, but it was truly good for our souls, because, as Janet Martinelli writes in *Stalking the Wild Amaranth*, "Prairie gardens are sacred ground for the human spirit." ☺

—Carol Niendorf, Fox Valley Area Chapter



My husband and I live in the country in southwest Wisconsin. Our house has many windows. As I sit at our breakfast table looking out this snowy January day, I see about 70 birds flutter around our birdfeeders. I see Goldfinches, Chickadees, Juncos, Woodpeckers, Bluejays, Purple Finches, Tree Sparrows, Nuthatches and Cardinals. Last year a Tufted Titmouse came to dine. One feeder hangs under the eaves, the others are 15 to 20 feet away, situated amongst groups of Gray Dogwood, Hazelnut, and Serviceberry shrubs as well as two Whitespire Birch and an Ash tree.

We planted these trees and shrubs in a cluster on a small hillside. Elsewhere around our house we have planted islands of American Highbush Cranberry, Red-osier Dogwood, Nannyberry, Coralberry, glossy Black Chokeberry and a single Pagoda Dogwood, all of which offer a veritable supermarket of autumn berries.

To address the problem of birds flying into our windowpanes, we have wedged bare tree and shrub branches under the eaves against the windows.

I promote the use of native shrubs, not only for the birds but for aesthetic reasons. Professional landscapers emphasize softening the outlines of your home with shrubs of various sizes. Islands of shrubs along the approach to a home create a sense of mystery and are far more pleasing than bare, open lawn. ☺ **—Barb Glass, Little Valley Farm**

COMMANDMENT I: *Thou shall have no other goals than environmentalism.* Make the bettering and preserving of the environment your reason for gardening. Constantly keep that reason in mind and don't let aesthetics, tradition, or trends compromise that goal. In every decision you make, consider whether your action will help or harm the environment. When you want to build a patio to allow your family to spend more time enjoying the outdoors, that is furthering the goal, because a family that spends time in nature will love nature, and a family that loves nature will help and protect it. But deciding of what material to make the patio and what materials to use to furnish it will all require some research and then some weighing of the pros and cons of each material. It is no longer a matter of picking out something simply because you like it.

Commandment II: *Thou shall construct no false landscapes.* Stay true to your local ecosystems. Research what would have been on your land in pre-settlement times and use those plants and only those plants. Avoid plants that are not local to your immediate site but only local to your state or local to the USA. These plants are not truly 'native' for your land, not truly natural parts of your pre-settlement local ecosystem. Things local to other parts of our continent can be invasive, just as those from other continents can. And anything not from the ecosystem you are trying to reconstruct is taking up space that could hold native plants and therefore be contributing to the balance and web of interactions that occurs when the right associations of plants and animals are achieved.

COMMANDMENT III: *Thou shall not vainly argue about the movement's name.* Don't worry about what to call what we do. *Natural landscaping, naturalistic landscaping, wild gardening, restoration, recreating, renovation:* Each term has merit and each in some way fails to totally describe what we, the natural landscaping movement, are. Let's stop quibbling over the best or right name and unite over our common goals. Getting on with the work of it and spreading the idea to others is far more important than exact semantics.

COMMANDMENT IV: *Thou shall keep the movement in good reputation.* Keep the natural landscaping idea a good thing in the public eye by doing nothing to tarnish the reputation of natural landscaping. Insult no one who doesn't pursue the natural landscaping goals with the fervor of a purist, but praise and recognize each small step in that direction. Encourage and direct, rather than discourage and boss. Be as politically astute as you can in finding and preserving natural

areas and native plants. And keep your own plot as neighbor friendly as you can. Letting your plot look messy will turn off those people who need to be converted. Use swoops and masses of the more colorful plants to make passersby love it. Keep it weeded, for natural landscaping is no excuse for neglect. Achieving public acceptance and building public interest are the first steps in spreading the natural landscape movement.

Commandment V: *Thou shall honor all parts of the ecosystem.* As gardeners, we tend to think only of the plants, we must but allow and encourage all fauna as well, such as ants, bumblebees, wasps, worms, aphids, snakes, frogs, salamanders. If you plant the plants, but then trap the skunks and kill the harmless snakes and squash the slugs and poison the ants, you are not allowing the ecosystem, the working environment, to be rebuilt. You are gardening for your own pleasure only, not to rebuild the environment. These creatures may inconvenience us, but these things are all a part of the prairie, wetland, or forest ecosystem that was here and which we are trying to regain. If you can't learn to love them and find interest and beauty in them, at least learn to respect and tolerate them.

COMMANDMENT VI: *Thou shall not allow in anything that will kill any part of your desired ecosystem.* Keep out nonnative weeds. Search out local experts who know which weeds are the true long-term problems and which are temporary ones that will be crowded out as your stronger native plants grow, so that you can focus on the real problems without wasting time on the others. Focus on the weedy invasives to prevent them from becoming an unmanageably large problem. Use no chemicals, or use chemicals extremely selectively. Most insects are actually beneficial to the ecosystem, even though they may cause holes in some plant leaves. Most diseases are not bad enough to truly harm the plant in the long term any more than the occasional common cold or influenza harms a human. Weigh any decision to use chemicals very carefully, considering the option of doing nothing as your first choice. What will be the worst case if you leave the insect or disease to run its course? What other natural control might step in? How long can you afford to wait? What harm will the chemical do, and is that harm worth the solution of the problem? Don't let misguided advice and techniques lead you from your goal. For example, many experts still advocate fall cleanup, which removes too much biodegradable material, removes eggs, larvae, removes winter habitat, removes winter seed sources, removes chance for seed to spread. Make each planting

Ten Commandments

and maintenance decision with the ultimate goal in mind, weighing costs and benefits to make the best choices.

COMMANDMENT VII: *Thou shall honor the movement by staying committed to its goals.* Stay committed to the goals of environmentalism, and take every opportunity to tell other people about them. Inquire publicly about the environmental positions of political candidates. Vote and express your opinions to those in power. Write letters to companies or letters to the editors of your local papers about environmental issues. Teach kids whenever you can, by volunteering at schools, camps, daycare centers, park districts, church camps, scout groups, 4-H clubs, youth groups, whatever your community offers that allows interaction with kids. Volunteer at a local nature center or restoration effort and take a neighbor kid along.

COMMANDMENT VIII: *Thou shall not steal native plants from others.* Perform no digging in public places without explicit permission. While the roadsides used to be thought of as fair game for digging up 'wild flowers,' many now are actually planted. You would be pretty mad if someone were caught stealing plants you had planted in your garden, wouldn't you? And if the roadside is a rare prairie remnant, even more important that you leave all the plants there, that you leave the species mix and species proportions intact. If you see such an area, rather than steal the plants for your yard, find out if there is a stewardship group taking care of the area. If there is, volunteer to help. If there isn't, try to get one started. However, do make it your obligation to dig up and relocate plants in order to rescue them when plants are in danger of being destroyed, giving them away if you don't have room in your garden or if you don't have the right conditions to grow them successfully.

COMMANDMENT IX: *Thou shall not make false claims about natural landscaping.* There are many benefits touted of natural landscaping, but many of them are myths or downright untrue. It is said that natural landscaping will require less maintenance, will 'take care of itself.' This may have been true at one time, but it is not now. There

are too many alien weeds that our native landscapes cannot tolerate, so any natural landscape requires our constant vigilance against those invaders. It is said that natural landscaping requires less watering, yet for success, at initial planting time, a native landscape can require as much water as an exotic landscape. The myth that a prairie must be burned, may cause harm to the movement by discouraging people from such plantings. A prairie benefits from burning, yes, but where that is not possible, such as near buildings or near a road where smoke could be dangerous, other maintenance methods can be employed. Learn the details of your native ecosystems and keep current by attending workshops and classes and seminars, and by re-attending them every few years, as practices change and new ideas are found to work. Keep yourself educated and when you hear a myth, correct it immediately if you can diplomatically do so, or follow up later. If the myth occurs in a group setting, correcting it then will keep the large number hearing it from spreading it on. So be polite and maybe phrase it as a question, but do attempt a correction.

Commandment X: *Thou shall not covet the beautiful exotic landscape plants.* The nursery, your neighbor's yard, the corporate campuses, shopping malls, all are planted to beautiful non-native ornamental plants that tempt you every time they burst into full bloom. But for

every alien beauty, there can be found a native just as beautiful. Just keep focused. Allow yourself to analyze the exotics you find beautiful, then search the inventories of locally native plants for species that have those characteristics. Remember that every Daylily you plant is taking up real estate that could be occupied by a native. Remember that every Hosta you plant is useless to native fauna that could feed on it, breed on it, and make it their home if it were a native plant from your local ecosystem. 🌱

—Karma L. Grotelueschen

Karma L. Grotelueschen is the landscape designer for PlannedScapes, Warrenville, Ill., and can be reached by voice or fax at (630) 393-4598.

Disclaimer

I, Karma L. Grotelueschen, do confess that I have sinned against the natural landscaping movement and will continue to do so by growing Daylilies in the sun and Hostas in the shade, and a whole host of other exotics. The ephemeral beauty of that waxy brilliant Daylily blossom that I can pick and hold and lay on a plate next to my drafting table, because it will be dead tomorrow, is too strong for me to resist. I love the tactile, visual, and olfactory experience of Daylilies. Hosta are so easy to grow, so reliable, so non-invasive, and those with white or yellow in their leaves brighten up a dark shady garden like no native I've discovered. They form the structure around pockets of spring ephemerals, the contrast to the darks of Mayapples and Wild Ginger. I have some plants given to me by other gardeners, and that connection to generations past and friends present are too precious to me to give them up. In summary, we all make our own choices, and the above 'Ten' I submit to you as *idealized goals* of the natural landscaping movement. From these strict commandments as a basis, we must each make our own choices each day that we garden.

Family: Berberidaceae (Barberry)

Other Names: Wild Mandrake, Hog Apple, Wild Lemon, Umbrella Leaf, Raccoon Berry, Indian Apple, Vegetable Mercury, Duck's Foot, American Mandrake, Devil's Apple, Yellowberry, Puck's-Foot, Vegetable Calomel, and more.

Habitat: Damp, shady clearings and rich woods.

Description: The Mayapple can be a one- or two-leaved plant. The one-leaved plant is flowerless. The two-leaved plant has two symmetrical, lobed leaves that are

attached to the two forks of the stem by their inner edges. Emerging from the crotch is a single, nodding, waxy-white flower with six to nine petals and twice as many stamens. The leaves can be up to 1 foot wide. The fruit is a large, lemon-like berry.

Height: 12 to 18 inches. **Flowering:** April to June.

Comments: The somewhat bitter fruit is edible and was often used as a flavoring or to make marmalade. A southern drink is made from wine, sugar and the juice of the Mayapple. Some folks think the fruit has flavor reminiscent of strawberry (when fully ripe).

Recordings from the 1700s reveal that this plant was called, Citronier. It was said to be "*acid. good to eat. but feverish.*"

The root contains deadly poisonous substances. When the Indian men could not bear their troubles or face life's problems, they partook of the root of the Mayapple and died. The women also used it, sometimes when "*the least grief betakes them.*" Many people were saved by prompt admission of an emetic, otherwise death took place within a few hours.

Even though the flower has no nectar it is, nevertheless, cross-pollinated by early bees and bumblebees.

There is an impressive stand of Mayapples at Marsh Haven Nature Center, located on State Hwy. 49, along the Horicon Marsh in Wisconsin. If you're in the area, don't miss this beautiful treasure. As you walk its winding paths in spring, you can't help but notice the abundant woodland wildflowers. The Mayapple stand so impressed me that I just stood there for a few moments and admired them—not wanting to leave. Of course, I photographed them, but photography can't always capture the sense of awe and wonder when viewing the actual scene.

Medicinal Use: In 1974 it was reported that Mayapple is a potential new cash crop of eastern

North America. The medicinal use of the plant as a purgative and de-wormer was already known to the Indians before the white settlers arrived. Researchers have discovered that because of its low side effects, the plant's main ingredient, podophyllum extract, should be given right after radiation treatment for cancer. Mayapple is collected in the wild

and Abbot Laboratories buys up the supplies, where 300,000 pounds are needed annually. It would be beneficial to cultivate Mayapple on a commercial scale

MAYAPPLE

(*Podophyllum peltatum*)

but, generally, little is known about growing the plant.

Name Origin: The genus name, *Podophyllum* (po-do-FIL-lum), is from the Greek word, *pous* or *podos*, meaning "a foot," and *phylon*, meaning "a leaf." This refers to the shape of the leaf. Early botanists believed the term to mean "duck's foot leaf," for the resemblance of the leaf shape to a duck's foot.

The species name, *peltatum* (pell-TAY-tum), is from the Latin word, *pelta*, meaning "small shield," referring to how the leaf is attached to the stalk. Family name is pronounced, ber-berry-DAY-see-ee.

Author's Note: While doing my research on wild plants, I found the following quote: "At least 25 percent of the prescriptions dispensed by the modern-day physician contain active ingredients from plants." "Furthermore," says Norman R. Farnsworth, Ph.D., a former pharmacy scientist at the Illinois Medical Center in Chicago, "essentially all of the plants yielding useful drugs, or which are found in prescriptions as extracts, are rich in medicinal folklore."

Even though our scientific and medical experts know the value of plants for our survival, we still continue to destroy the habitat that supports them. Where I live (Sheboygan County, Wis.), the original vegetation maps show that 200 years ago this area was completely covered with trees, including the understory of native woodland vegetation. As we travel about the countryside of Sheboygan County today, very little remains of those vast forests. What we have are acres and acres of cleared land for agriculture, subdivisions and numerous gravel pits. Any land that is left wild is considered unsightly and unkempt. Rural officials are even demanding that large and small parcels be kept mowed so the countryside looks "neat and tidy," with no regard for the wildlife these areas protect and feed. ☛

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PROPAGATING MAYAPPLE

Mayapple seeds need to be planted shortly after turning ripe and before they dry out. It would be advisable to wear rubber gloves or be diligent about washing your hands after working with Mayapple as handling roots has been known to cause a rash for some people.

Separate seed from the fruit and plant 1/2 inch deep outdoors. If planting in a flat for greenhouse growing, keep the moist flat in a cold place (30° to 40°F) for several months or over winter. Germination should begin after placing the flat in a warm greenhouse after this period of moist stratification.

Mayapple is still fairly common in many woodlands. If you participate in Wild Ones plant rescues, you may be able to dig some for your yard. As always, asking fellow Wild Ones members whether they have some plants to spare, may supply you with what you need to get started. Mayapple easily colonizes an area given its preferred woodland conditions. 🌱

—Alan Wade
Prairie Moon Nursery
Winona, Minn.

JOIN OTHER WILD ONES

EXTEND A HELPING HAND— LANDSCAPE A HABITAT HOME

How many times have you dreamed about having a beautiful front or back yard? In just one-half day your chapter can do this for a **Habitat for Humanity** family and have a fulfilling meeting with everyone sharing ideas and labor to transform a yard into a garden. Our Columbus, Ohio, chapter voted to allocate \$300 toward just such a project.

We had a planning committee consisting of Karen Matz, Ann Light-hiser, and myself. We asked Habitat for Humanity to recommend a family interested in having a native plant group help with some limited landscaping of their home. We explained our goal is to promote the use of native plants, to encourage diversity of plants in neighborhoods, extend habitat for birds and animals, and to limit the use of herbicides in yards. Barbara Hamilton was randomly chosen to be the recipient; we could not have received a warmer, more loving and interested gardener than she. We met twice at her home to determine what priorities and specific needs she had to ensure the landscape plan we developed reflected her personal input. We also included the local Daffodil Society; they donated a large variety of daffodil bulbs.

We were especially blessed that Tom Kessler of Renewables, Inc. was planning to dismantle his demonstration prairie garden that he had had for four years at the Franklin Conservatory. On a Wednesday in the pouring rain, he dug up all the plants he would donate, marked them with a bright ribbon, and set them aside for me to pick up. After work, in the dark, I searched out the plants. With the help of the security guards on duty, we loaded the plants onto a dolly and transferred them to my car, and off I went to store them on Barbara Hamilton's porch until our Saturday meeting.

At 9 a.m. on Nov. 10, 1998, we started working. It was a picture-perfect fall day. By 11:30 the beds were laid out and we started to mix in the mushroom compost. We tentatively laid out the plants to ensure their colors, textures, and heights complemented each other and maximized their beauty. When finally arranged to everyone's satisfaction, we planted them. Finally the mulch was applied. What a great feeling to be surrounded by noticeable results from our labors, and knowing Karen Matz's homemade coffeecake and coffee were only a short hop and a skip away kept us going 'til the last bag of mulch was applied.

The Wild Ones of Ohio challenges each chapter to become actively involved in a Habitat project. A regular meeting scheduled as a workday was successful for us. Please call me at (614) 792-7839 if you would like more information about either of the two Habitat gardening projects I have been involved in.

—Barbara Altenburg



The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) program on Wild Ones brought me a wonderful gift: new friends Julie and Howard.

My new neighbor's mother saw the show in her home in England. When she had learned her daughter was to move to Milwaukee, she said, "You must

**FULL
CIRCLE**

find the Wild Ones. They are in Milwaukee."

The parents came to visit recently. I eagerly arranged yard tours and escorted them to truly American gardens. Now my husband and I may visit them in Cornwall, England, and enjoy experiencing their spring wildflowers! 🌱 —Mary Lee Croatt

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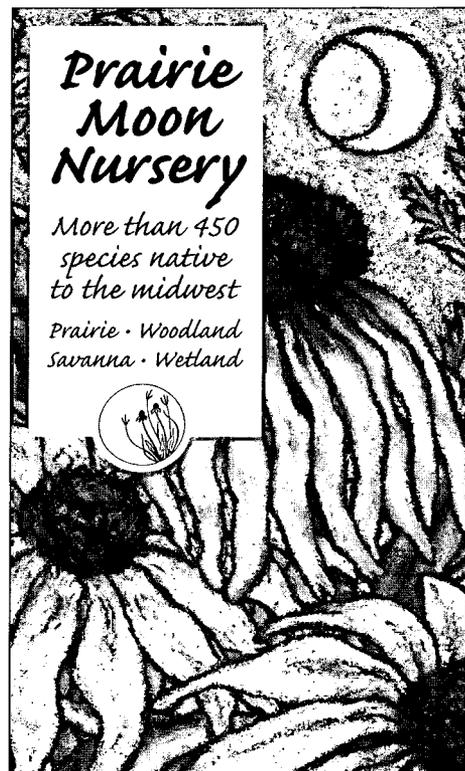
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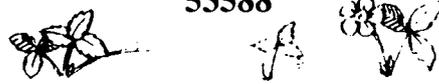
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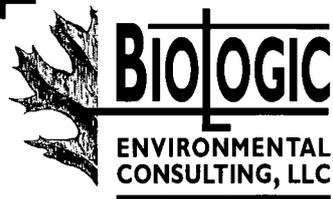
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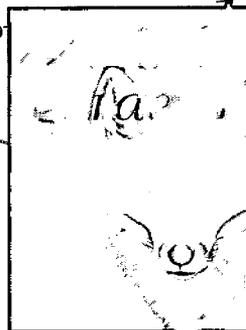
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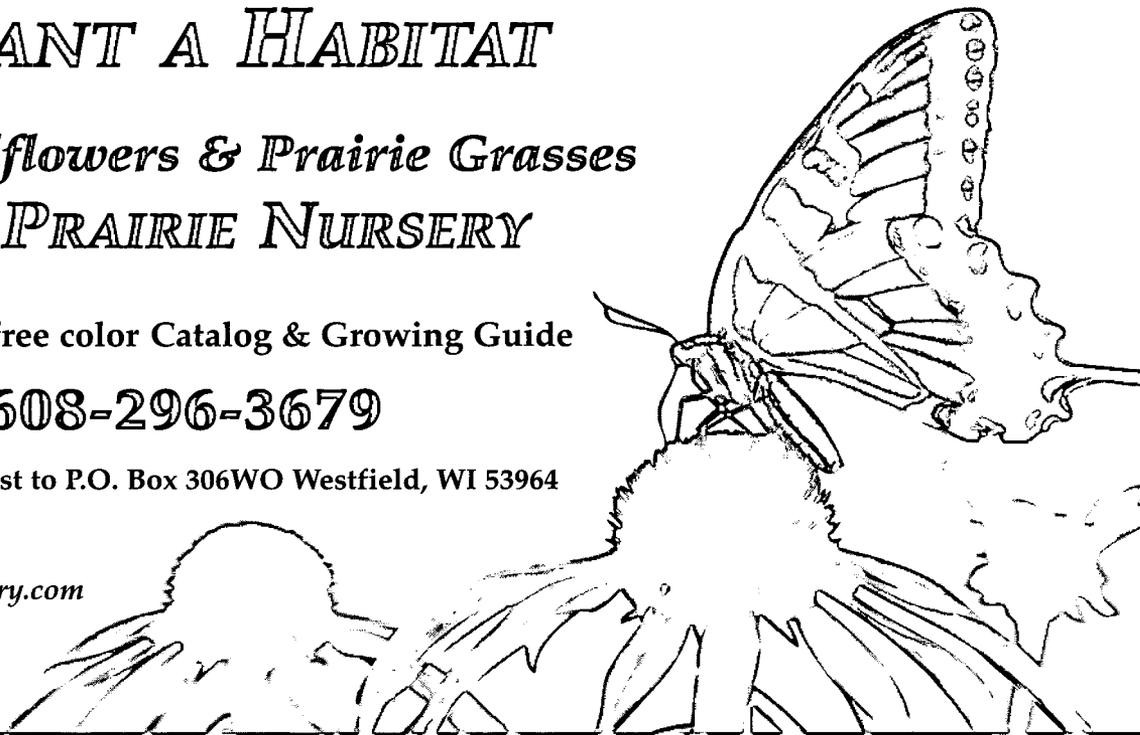
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Fran Glass of St. Louis, Mo., shares a view of her Wild Ones yard sign amidst Southern Blue Flag Iris and Marsh and Swamp Milkweed. You might also notice the clothesline in the background—another 'sign' of conservation.

Aluminum yard signs proclaiming "this land is in harmony with nature" are available from your local chapter or send \$21 to: Wild Ones Yard Sign, P.O. Box 23576, Milwaukee, WI 53223-0576.



Submit a photo of your yard sign for this column, or...
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If you'd like your materials returned, kindly include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Thanks!

Wild Ones Journal % Joy Buslaff
589 W22630 Milwaukee Ave., Big Bend, WI 53103.

GREATER DUPAGE GOES BATTY!

Have you ever seen a *live* bat six inches from your nose?! Last March the Greater DuPage Wild Ones were inspired and enthralled by Rob Mies of the Organization for Bat Conservation out of Williamston, Mich. The evening began with slides and some interesting facts.

Did you know that a human would have to eat approximately 50 large pizzas a day to equal the amount of insects one bat eats in a night? While showing some of OBC's live bats (which are either orphaned or injured), Rob was inundated with questions from the 60 or so attendees.

Although seemingly unrelated to native plants, we did learn that some of the most common bats in the Midwest prefer roosting in Green Ash and Silver Maple trees, with infrequent occurrences in Shag-bark Hickory, and that bats eat insects that are attracted to night-blooming plants such as Evening Primrose. Yet another fascinating facet of our natural world revealed! 🦇

—Margrit A. Nitz

For further scintillating facts on bats, contact:

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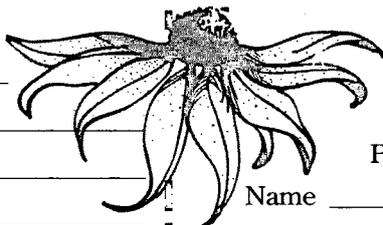
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