

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



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Celebrating natives
plant and natural
landscapes
since 1979.

The Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Greetings!

The Grapevine is a new column for the Journal. We need your input to keep our 38 chartered chapters plus seedling chapters aware of each other's activities and to support each other. The possibilities and opportunities are limitless!

As Wild Ones has grown beyond its cradle in Wisconsin to include chapters in ten other states, it has become increasingly difficult and important for the Chapters to find a way to maintain contact with each other. Staying in touch can also serve to fortify seedling chapters, giving our newest members ideas for activities and fund raising, and letting them know that other groups have survived what they are now experiencing.

In the field of natural landscaping with native plants, Wild Ones is not quite like any other organization out there. Our membership is composed of people who are eager to acquire information for themselves, to implement what they learn, and to share this information with anyone who will listen. The Journal offers us an unequalled opportunity to share our ideas and information with each other, thereby potentially sharing both with an even broader audience.

So, let's hear from you. Is your chapter involved in a community project? Have you had a particularly interesting speaker at one of your meetings? How does your chapter raise money for its activities? Have you read a particularly instructive or inspiring book and would like to tell others about it? Have you learned something in your garden?

Send your ideas or information to: Wild Ones, PO Box 231, Lake Orion MI 48361. Or e-mail your notes to Journal@wildones.org and put "Grapevine" in the subject line.



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Many members of Ann Arbor's Chapter of wild Ones are also employees of the city's Natural Areas Preservation prescribed burn team – a convenient overlap.

Children's Wet Meadow

Jeannine Palms is an active member of the Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter of Wild Ones. Her front yard and utility strip between the sidewalk and the street are planted with a wondrous variety of native plants – from ferns and spring ephemerals to black-eyed Susans and prairie dock. On her back deck one is likely to find yogurt cups serving as seedling starters, tended by the children who come to her house after school. Beyond the gate in her back fence lies Buhr Park, one of the city's many open areas. With Jeannine's support and encouragement her after-school charges have made some inspiring contributions to the park.

Abby Huth, age 10, writes this in her first prize-winning photo-essay in a contest sponsored by the Michigan Environmental Council, published in the Detroit Free Press:

"The Children's Wet Meadow is a solution to the environmental problem of storm water. Before its creation

by a group of kids called 'Super Swampers' (including me), heavy rains quickly flooded the grass and caused nearby Mallett's Creek to rise. The water flowing into the creek was dirty, carried garbage, and polluted the Huron River. Our teacher, Jeannine Palms, explained how wet meadows let water soak into the ground slowly. All the plants' roots, which are very long, hold the water longer and clean it. It was our idea to make a wet meadow in Buhr Park. With the help of neighbors, it has become a model for others, showing what people can do to help clean our water. It's a beautiful and natural habitat that helps keep the water clean."

The Ann Arbor Wild Ones Chapter has helped the children by donating seed and burning the meadow when it was three years old. This chapter, chartered in 1996, was the first Michigan chapter of Wild Ones and has fostered nine chartered chapters and three seedling chapters.

Native Plants go to school

Thanks to Eileen Guthrie and the Central Wisconsin Chapter of Wild Ones, the plantings around Hewitt-Texas Elementary School's pond in Wausau, WI will have maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*), beebalm (*Monarda fistulosa*), and round lobed hepatica (*Hepatica rotundifolia*). When Eileen found out that the local landfill would be expanded during the next five years, plowing under more than 80 species of upland and wetland native plants, she worked to make these plants available for rescue by anyone willing to replant them on public land. Eileen and members of the Central Wisconsin Chapter dug the plants in the construction area, then, with children from all six elementary grades involved, sloshed about in the school's wetland, replanting the rescued plants. The principal, teachers, and children responded very positively to this educational experience. Eileen hopes to continue this rewarding relationship with the children in the coming years.

The Central Wisconsin Chapter of Wild Ones was established in 2001, and currently has approximately 50 members.

Maryann refers to her bachelor of arts degree and her graduate work in psychology as her misspent youth. When she came to her senses, she went back to read biology, botany, chemistry, physics, and ecology and has not yet stopped. She discovered Wild Ones in 1995 and was the founding president of the Oakland Chapter (MI) of Wild Ones in 1999. Currently she is serving as her chapter's membership and programs chair, on the national Communications Committee, and as the feature editor for the Journal. She and her husband, Doug, tend an acreage of Michigan wetland, oak-hickory-maple upland, and a small remnant wet/mesic prairie. Maryann is also active in environmental organizations in her part of southeastern Michigan.