

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



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Thank you. Back cover.

Working toward our next
25 years restoring native plants
and natural landscapes.

L A N D S C A P E D E S I G N

BACK TO NATURE

BY OLIVIA GRIDER

Some people call it a trend. Some call it a movement. Others say it's more than that – a fundamental shift in the way humankind views its relationship with nature. No matter how you label it, the push for native landscaping has been steadily gaining momentum for decades.

"Landscape companies today have a choice," says Bret Rappaport, a national board member of Wild Ones, a nonprofit group that advocates landscaping with native plants, and a lawyer who has represented natural landscapers. "That choice is either evolve or die. Because there's no question, this is the wave of the future."

Not everyone is convinced. Larry Rohlfes, assistant executive director for the California Landscape Contractors Association, says native landscaping is a small niche. "There's a big segment of the market that wants exotic plants," he says. "They want Hawaii in the back yard. They want to escape to a tropical landscape." A water district consortium's expensive campaign to promote native landscaping in order to conserve water did little to change this, he says.

But there are indications the market is moving toward natural landscaping. Some (local) governments require native landscaping in parks and around public buildings, and many state departments of transportation insist on native plants for roadsides. Homeowners' associations in new, usually high-end, subdivisions are increasingly calling for only native plants in landscaping. And water conservation laws in the western United States narrow the plant palette, leaving only natives and exotics from similar climates.

Federal, state, and local governments encourage private landowners to plant species indigenous to their areas. The U.S. EPA, for example, sponsors a native landscaping awards program. In five to 15 years, Rappaport predicts, governments will be mandating use of native plants through laws that ban exotics or require indigenous vegetation.

The ecological argument

Thousands of years of evolution make native plants ideal for their locations, says Jack Pizzo, owner of Pizzo and Associates, an ecological restoration and natural landscaping firm in Leland, Illinois, and a business member of the Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter of Wild Ones. Native plants are drought resistant and don't require watering, fertilizers, aeration, or insecticides.

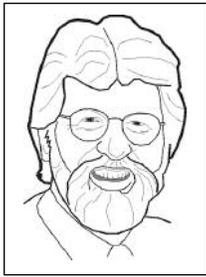
Rappaport says employing native landscapes in place of high-resource-using, non-native lawns and plants can lessen habitat loss, erosion, non-point-source water pollution, water waste, and – by increasing carbon-dioxide-absorbing biomass and reducing the need for gas-powered equipment – global warming.

As the foundation of any ecosystem, native flora is vital to the system's health. Certain plants require certain insects for pollination – birds feed on those insects, and a host of other wildlife species have adapted to a diet of native plants, says Ken Voorhis, Executive Director of the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. "It's all connected," he says.

As an example of this interrelation, Voorhis points out black bears in the Southeast are smaller than those in some other parts of North America because one of their main protein sources – chestnuts – was wiped out in a blight caused by a fungus introduced

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Not a Good-bye, But a New Beginning – and I'll Be Seeing You



This is my final "Notes" column. I have already chaired my last National Board meeting. Carol Andrews, from the Arrowhead (MN) Chapter in Duluth, Minnesota, will be taking over as National President at our third quarterly meeting in Dayton, Ohio, this August. It has been six years since we had a change in leadership, and it's about time. New ideas and passion come from new

blood! Don't get me wrong, I still have ideas and passion, but it is time for a change. All organizations need change to stay vital. Up-and-coming leaders need to know that they will get their opportunity to influence our direction.

So what have we accomplished during my term? I think our biggest accomplishment was to expand the membership to include businesses. While it is important to change the world one yard at a time, we need to step out of our own private world and take our message to the larger world. Where better to start than at work!

Other important accomplishments include the initiation of the Ecoscaper program, which provides additional learning opportunities for long-term members. We instituted new business-accounting practices that have resulted in balanced budgets for the last two years – something we hadn't done for the several preceding years.

While our total membership has remained pretty steady, we have expanded our base to many new chapters and several more

I still have things I want to accomplish, and now that I can redirect my energies, maybe I can get them done.

states. Our quarterly board meetings have been hosted by almost 20 different chapters, giving individual members a chance to meet the members of the National Board, and vice-versa, and to talk to each other.

I am not going away. I am just stepping aside to allow someone new to the helm. I still have things that I want to accomplish, and now that I can redirect my energies, maybe I can get them done.

Most importantly, I will be supporting the work of Carol Andrews and her executive team. We have important issues to focus on in the coming months, including climate change, our new National HQ, and developing a broader financial base.

Thank you for allowing me to take a turn at the helm, and for your continued support for our organization! I hope to meet you at a future quarterly board meeting in your area. ★

Joe Powelka, Wild Ones National President
president@for-wild.org

Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to encourage biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit, environmental, educational, and advocacy organization.

NATIONAL OFFICE

Executive Director

Donna VanBuecken
P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, WI 54912-1274
877-FYI-WILD (394-9453)
920-730-3986
Fax: 920-730-3986
E-mail: execdirector@for-wild.org

President

Joe Powelka • 608-837-6308
E-mail: president@for-wild.org

Vice-President & Editor-In-Chief

Carol Andrews • 218-730-9954
E-mail: vicepresident@for-wild.org

Secretary

Debi Wolterman • 513-934-3894
secretary@for-wild.org

Treasurer

Bret Rappaport • 847-945-1315
treasurer@for-wild.org

Communications Committee Chair

Bret Rappaport
E-mail: comco@for-wild.org

Seeds for Education Director

Steve Maassen • 920-233-5914
E-mail: seeddirector@for-wild.org

Web Site Coordinator

Peter Chen • webmanager@for-wild.org

LIBRARIAN

Robert Ryf • 920-361-0792
E-mail: library@for-wild.org

MEETING COORDINATOR

Mary Paquette • 920-994-2505
E-mail: meeting@for-wild.org

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WILD ONES JOURNAL EDITOR

Maryann Whitman • 248-652-4004
E-mail: journal@for-wild.org
(Please indicate topic in subject line.)

WILD ONES JOURNAL STAFF

Barbara Bray, Contributing Editor
Celia Larsen, Contributing Editor
Mandy Ploch, Contributing Editor

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Writers & Artists

Dave Wendling is Co-President of the Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter of Wild Ones. **Nancy Small** is past Co-President and co-founder of the chapter.

Marianne L. Hahn is a member of the Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter. Our thanks to **James Trager** for the thistle ID photos. He's a member of the St. Louis (MO) Chapter.

June Kallestad is the Public Relations Coordinator for University of Minnesota at Duluth, Natural Resources Research Institute. **Dr. Cindy Hale**, is a scientist with the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI) at University of Minnesota.

Diana Krug is a member of the Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter. She tells us her passion lies in nature, whether on a grand scale in national parks, along a railroad track, or in a back lot. "Planting a garden feels to me like painting three-dimensionally, each species with its associates becoming an ecosystem of color, texture and purpose."

Celia Larsen is a member of the Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter, and **Max Ortlieb** was a second grader in Northville, Michigan, when he made the drawings for Celia's article.

Barb Bray is president of the Oakland (MI) Chapter.

BUSINESS MEMBER CHALLENGE

Just a reminder that, due to the generosity of the **Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter**, Wild Ones National is able to extend last year's "Most New Wild Ones Business Members Challenge." Rock River Valley Chapter was one of last year's winners, and they returned the award to National. As a result, the chapter that enlists the most new business members between March 1 and August 1, 2007, will receive the \$150 award. So get busy. Bring in those new business members, and see your chapter receive the \$150 award during the 2007 Wild Ones annual Meeting.

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It's Time for You to Step Up to the Plate

Are you up for the EcoCenter Challenge?

The Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter's challenge will multiply your chapter's financial contributions to Wild Ones EcoCenter and HQ.

Now is the time to act! We have a rare and exciting opportunity to step up our promotion of environmentally sound landscaping practices. A permanent **National Wild Ones Headquarters**, along with a working ecology center, will help immensely in this effort. Having it in Wisconsin's Fox Valley, home of one of the largest PCB contamination cleanup projects in the world will help make the **EcoCenter** a showplace of what can be done to restore the health of an ecosystem. • Members of the **Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter** of Wild Ones wish to show their support for purchase of the Wild Ones EcoCenter with a **1:2 pledge of an amount up to \$20,000**, and a challenge to all other Wild Ones chapters. Fox Valley Area Chapter will match \$1 for every \$2 raised by Wild Ones chapters across the country, with the hope that our \$20,000 will raise an additional \$40,000 by March 1, 2008. • Fran Lowman, Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter wrote to say, "When I saw what Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter was willing to part with for the EcoCenter I was amazed. It inspired me to send a personal check for the EcoCenter." **Please encourage your chapters to step up to the challenge.**





With ridges shrouded in ever-present mist and fog, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a national treasure.

A Voice in the Wilderness

One developer's quest to preserve a national treasure.

By Olivia Grider

The term “sustainable landscaping” is rarely heard in the Southeast, and consumer demand for native plants is almost non-existent. But Robin Turner hopes to change that.

Turner isn't involved in the landscape industry, and isn't a professional land developer. He started his career at Disney, and now owns a fair/attraction management company and Wonder-Works science education complexes in Orlando, Florida, and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. When he decided to create a residential development on a large swath of land bordering the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, he planned to live there himself, and felt a responsibility to protect the area's natural heritage.

Some partners in the development, called the Estates at Norton Creek, are also board members at the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, which is battling invasive exotic plants in the national park. To preserve one of the most diverse ecosystems in the world, those at the institute knew they would need the help of real estate developers rapidly building homes and commercial establishments around the park. They also knew they needed a successful test case to persuade developers.

The institute set up the Native Landscaping Certification Program last year, and Turner was happy to sign on as the first

participant. The program requires eradication of invasive exotic plants, and the use of native species in landscaping.

Turner says developers in the area would be interested in native landscaping if they understood it as an option. “This is going to be so much bigger than just us,” he says.

The challenges

Finding a source of native plants to use in landscaping is one of the biggest hurdles. Landscape contractors and designers in the Pacific Northwest and parts of the upper Midwest say native plant nurseries are plentiful thanks to demand. But in the Gatlinburg, Tennessee, area, Turner says there's only one native garden, and it's too small to fulfill Norton Creek's needs.

There's also the question of whether using nursery-grown plants is the best solution. A public cabin near the entrance to the subdivision is landscaped with rhododendron and cedar trees, but Turner isn't satisfied with the look. The nursery plants are easy to pick out among the wild ones, even though they're the same types. The cedars are almost perfectly shaped cones, and the rhododendron lack the rambling appearance of those grown in the forest.

If nursery plants aren't grown from seeds gathered near the site where they'll be planted, they might not be the same species as those growing naturally and won't be adapted to the area, says Ken Voorhis, executive director of the Institute at Tremont.

Turner also wants to find a way to salvage the native plants displaced by roads winding through the development and home building. Lot owners are allowed to disturb only an 80-foot by 100-foot area for a house pad, but if plants there could be saved, they could be used to landscape around the finished home, Turner says.

He's considering starting a native-plant greenhouse in Norton Creek, which is still at an infant stage, with one house nearing completion, and construction of nine others slated to begin this spring. The greenhouse would preserve plants that would be lost to building, and supply them for landscaping purposes. Turner says it could even become a separate business furnishing native plants to other developments.

But putting this plan into action isn't "as easy as sending a guy out with a spade to collect 10 azaleas," Turner says. Mountain laurel and rhododendron cling to the steep Appalachian hillsides, their roots entangled in rock. Turner is trying to find equipment that can traverse this terrain and extract plants and trees without harming them.

Finding knowledgeable local landscape contractors and nursery owners has been difficult as well. Most local landscapers, when asked if a plant is native, will reply, "Yeah, it's native – it grows here," he says. Once a nursery owner claimed to have a native maple tree, but it turned out to be Japanese.

Turner says he hopes Tremont will certify landscapers eventually. Then developers involved in the native-landscaping program would have easy access to qualified experts. Developer participation in the program also would drive demand for native plants, resulting in more supply sources, Turner says.

Trial and error on a 725-acre test site

At this point, the dominant task at hand in Norton Creek is following the first step of the institute's guidelines: eradicating exotics. A few trees tagged with orange ribbons can be seen from the main road through the first phase of the development. While most of the vegetation on the 725-acre site is native, two pockets of invasive plants are encroaching. One is literally holding a mountainside together, Turner says, and clearing it would cause an erosion problem. Experts at Tremont recommended removing it in stages.

Japanese switchgrass – used as a packing material in shipments from China – is growing in some cleared areas. Switchgrass seeds are viable for seven years. Native flora prevents it from growing, but it often shoots up after land clearing, Voorhis says. Other exotic invasives in the area include privet, tree of heaven, mimosa, honeysuckle, and wild (multi-flora) rose.

Being a test case for the certification program involves a lot of trial and error. The Tremont Institute sets its ideal rules, and Turner lets the board know what's unrealistic as the development moves along.

One problem has been stabilizing steep road banks. Native ground cover won't grow fast enough to prevent erosion, so the development has been forced to break the NLCP rules by planting grass, which isn't native.

A big unknown is whether the homeowners of Norton Creek will be able to abandon exotic plants and traditional landscaping methods. "This is a challenge, because people have certain species they're used to seeing," Voorhis says. Many plants people think are native, aren't. And some plants considered undesirable are indigenous.

Looking over the long NLCP native plant list, Bill Oliphant, a landscape architect and adviser for the program, notes most of the plants, though beautiful, are not commercially available. Oliphant says sumacs, for instance, have gorgeous fall color, but are commonly considered weeds. Four hickory tree species are on the list. "I've never had a client in my whole 40-some-odd years of

work want a hickory," he says. "It'll be a different look." Homeowners might be limited not only by the list, but by their particular location. Voorhis points out that the native vegetation on northern slopes is completely different from that on south-facing ones. Sunlight washes south-facing slopes most of the day, creating a dry environment where blueberry bushes, mountain laurel, and galax flourish. Around the corner, on a north-facing slope, higher moisture levels in the soil support rhododendron, hemlocks, and woodland wildflowers.

Teaching homeowners to resist the urge to prune and shear their plants will be a top priority, Oliphant says. "That's the question," he says. "Will people be willing to accept the gangly, unkempt look of them?"

But Turner is optimistic. Most people buying lots at Norton Creek live in busy cities and want to build a retreat in an authentic natural environment, he says. They don't want to bring Atlanta to the mountains, he says. As for enforcement of the NLCP's requirements, Turner says the development can't be a police state. "It's got to be fun," he says. "We've got to educate them and make them part of the process."

Even at this early stage, Norton Creek appears to be a success – especially from a developer's perspective. Spectacular views of the mountain ranges in the nation's most visited national park aren't cheap. Still, 40 of the 75 lots in the first phase of the luxury development have sold, most for about \$500,000 each. And the native landscaping program is a selling point. It assures buyers that the natural beauty that drew them to the area won't change.

Turner would like to see local governments as well as other developers adopt the program. "In the global picture, if my neighbor's not doing it, I've still got this problem," he says.

Turner and Voorhis envision a future in which the public will see invasive exotic plants the way it now regards roadside litter. In 25 years people will have the knowledge and inclination to remove invasive exotics from their properties on their own, Turner says. Nurseries and home improvement stores will quit carrying the plants because no one will buy them, he predicts. "These invasives will be like a 10-most-wanted list," he says. ★

Landscaping Goals at Norton Creek

The Tremont Institute offers three certification levels – silver, gold and platinum – in its native landscaping program. The Estates at Norton Creek is striving for the highest level, says developer Robin Turner, and has committed to:

- Eradicating invasive, non-native plants on the institute's removal list.
- Landscaping all public areas with native plants.
- Using native plants that are particularly beneficial to wildlife.
- Educating homeowners regarding the importance of using native plants.
- Ensuring homeowners' landscapes are native.

Let's Take Some Credit for the Important Work We're Doing

By Dave Wendling and Nancy Small

It was at a late-afternoon meeting of the officers of Kalamazoo Area (MI) Wild Ones that I first mentioned the idea of doing a survey of the total amount of land being protected and restored by our members. While my fellow officers didn't exactly jump out of their chairs shouting with joy over my terrific idea, they did allow as how it sounded pretty good and encouraged me to go ahead.

Where the idea came from, I suppose, was my volunteer work for two land trusts: the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and the Michigan Nature Association – organizations which protect land in perpetuity, and try to maintain or restore its ecological integrity. At the very least, they try to keep the land in their care from being overrun with aggressive, non-native plants. The number of acres belonging to each organization that I work for is steadily increasing, thanks to fundraising for purchasing land, and donations of land by individuals and families. So I eventually began to wonder about how much land is being maintained and restored (while being protected on at least a temporary basis) by members of my local Wild Ones chapter.

With the approval of the Executive Committee, I put together a form and sent it out, eliciting 44 responses from the 102 households surveyed. (Many thanks to everyone who responded.) The properties of the 44 respondents range from small urban yards to big parcels out in the country. When I tabulated the results, they were truly astonishing: 993 acres (more than 43 million square feet) are being protected by members of the Kalamazoo Area (WI) Wild Ones Chapter, and improved or restored with native plants. **Wow – our chapter itself is a kind of small land trust.**

And these totals don't include the land, some of it owned by the City of Kalamazoo and the public schools (and thus to some extent permanently protected), that our chapter's Community Projects Committee is working to restore. One of the most gratifying aspects of the survey is that some of the 993 acres that members are working on have already been donated to the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, our local land trust.

The survey also revealed that of the 993 acres under the care of chapter members,

535 acres are shaded, 284 receive full sun to part shade, and 174 are wetlands. Respondents often provided vivid glimpses of their achievements and problems: one person has restored the hydrology of 10 acres of wetland, and many are energetically fighting aggressive invasive plants. One member reports "putting in [2,000 square feet of] oak savanna this week." In southwest Michigan, oak savanna is an endangered ecosystem.

Best of all, people clearly mean to keep working. Most respondents plan to create additional areas filled with native plants, or enhance degraded natural areas with additional native plants. One respondent said, "I continue to remove woodland invasives like garlic mustard and honeysuckle and replant with native under-story shrubs." Another member has undertaken the lifelong project of turning a pine plantation back into a native, deciduous forest. Still another is restoring a pine plantation to an oak barren – its pre-European settlement state. Many new projects are planned or under way, including rain gardens, monarch way stations, oak savanna, and prairie plantings.

How do we as a chapter maintain this pace? Certainly we must help and support one another, visit each other's properties, share our knowledge and equipment, our plants and seeds. We must try to recruit not only additional members for the chapter, but also people young and old who are willing to help us in order to learn more about nature and to experience the satisfaction of helping restore land. We must make continual efforts to educate the community about the great importance of preserving wild land, and restoring land that has been degraded. The rapid pace of species extinction and the looming dangers of climate change make both education and action ever more urgent.

A still greater challenge is that of transferring the land we have protected and improved to those who come after us. Genuine restoration (if possible at all) requires many years of continuous maintenance, sometimes even perpetual maintenance. In Michigan, for example, prairie restorations must periodically be burned if they are not to be invaded by shrubs. We can try to instill in our children a sense of how important and satisfying it is to pro-

tect and restore land, and hope that they will be able to carry on our work. But we can be almost certain that our children will face enormous pressure from developers and others who view wild or restored land as empty or uninhabited.

We can also encourage the formation of a national network of homeowners and others seeking to buy or sell land, who are willing to maintain it in its wild condition, or carry on the restoration that has already begun. Given the growing public awareness of global warming, the number of people who share our goals must be increasing steadily. Perhaps – and this would be the ideal situation – the work we do to maintain or restore our land will be so successful (or so promising) that a land trust will accept the land as a donation or be willing to purchase it.

Something that can be done right away – and with relative ease to publicize our work, and reassure ourselves that we are making a difference – is to encourage each of the 46 Wild Ones chapters to conduct surveys similar to mine and publicize the results of them locally, as we plan to do. (I'll provide National with a slightly refined version of the survey form.) Totals for each state can then be obtained – and publicized at the state level. Wouldn't they be impressive, especially for states like Wisconsin and Michigan that have 13 and nine chapters respectively?

Finally, state totals can be combined by National, and the grand total for the organization as a whole be publicized nationally. From the results of such a survey, all Wild Ones chapters will receive favorable publicity, and perhaps gain significant numbers of new members.

Let's do it. ★

Katherine D. Rill

We are sad to know that Katherine D. Rill, long-time member of Wild Ones, passed away recently. Katherine's life illustrated how an ordinary person who is committed to one idea over a lifetime, can have an extraordinary impact. To learn more about Katherine, who was a member of the Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, see the November/December 2006 and July/August 2003 issues of the *Journal*, or go to the Wild Ones web site www.for-wild.org/download/people/krill/krill.html.



My Mother's Milkweed

By Barbara Bray



A monarch caterpillar feeding on a milkweed leaf.

My mother has always been a gardener. She taught me how to plant gardens, and how to take care of them. She pointed out the beautiful blossoms, and showed me which plants were loved by birds and butterflies. Now, many years later, I get to return the favor. My mother has listened closely to my stories about growing native plants. She finds it curious and interesting that people want to grow "weeds" and wildflowers. Last year, she embarked on her own native-plant adventure by growing several common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) plants in her garden. I explained to her how milkweed is important to monarch butterflies and their caterpillars. She was excited and wanted to see what would happen.

A few weeks later I went to visit her again. We walked outside to her sunny south-facing garden. She told me that she had noticed little lumps on the underside of the thick green leaves and several caterpillars wandering over the plants. Alarmed by the presence of these "invaders," she carefully scraped the lumps off and knocked the caterpillars to the ground. She was afraid that they were killing the milkweed plants by eating them. I told her that those lumps were probably monarch butterfly eggs and the caterpillars were "baby" monarchs. When she realized what she had done, she was horrified. It never had occurred to her that the milkweed was supposed to be eaten. She said that this idea of

native plants being there as food for our native wildlife was a new idea to her.

By the end of summer, my mother was very proud of her milkweed community. Her plants were like a living hotel occupied by fuzzy milkweed tussock caterpillars, jumping grasshoppers, and orange-and-black milkweed bugs. Her prized resident, however, was a rather comfortable-looking grey tree frog that lounged around on the leaves and pods of the plants. The frog can change its color to blend into its surroundings. My mom's tree frog was a lovely shade of milkweed green, just perfect enough to hide in plain sight from unwary insects passing by. Her small milkweed patch also attracted nectaring adult monarchs when the plants were blooming. They fluttered from plant to plant, and then out to her flower gardens. Maybe those monarchs laid eggs, but I don't know for sure.

Next year she wants to add a few more milkweed plants in different areas. The monarch butterflies seem to fly in circles looking for more milkweeds. Maybe this is due to their egg-laying behavior. Monarch butterflies usually lay only one egg per plant, oftentimes on one of the upper leaves.

My mom and I are looking forward to our milkweed communities growing again this summer. The "Next Generation" is not just for kids, but for all those who are "young at heart" and willing to learn. ★

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Renaissance Garden: Return of the Natives

By Diana Krug



Before: In the spring of 2005 the circle was planted with indifferent, non-native grasses. Summer of 2006: One year later the strong architecture of the native plants is already evident: rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), prairie blazing star (*Liatris pycnostachya*), compass plant (*Silphium laciniatum*), and stiff goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*). The lower two pictures show the planting in its second year, summer of 2007. Many plants are already blooming, such as the prairie phlox (*Phlox pilosa*), pale coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), and butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*).

Living beside the green island that is Palos Forest Preserve, 16,000 acres that are part of Cook County's (Illinois) 60,000-acre Forest Preserve District, and following its paths, brought me to beautiful communities of plants, and compelled me to learn their names and plight. Palos Restoration Project (PRP) was the kick in the pants I needed to spur me to implement the knowledge I'd been acquiring from books. Heck, if we can make a difference in 16,000 acres, then a 770 square foot circle surrounded by cement and townhouses should be a piece of clay cake – it's all about perspective. PRP and mentors like Regional Steward Roger Keller gave me the confidence to take on the planning and implementation of this native garden. Roger also lent his experience in the prairie rescue that supplemented our planting.

Renaissance Station is a 4-year-old townhouse development, which lies between acres of wilderness and the DesPlaines River, 30 minutes southwest of Chicago, and just down the street from the new Willow Springs Village Hall. Last year when there was talk of planting forbs in the circle, among the snarl of 5-foot tall hybrid grass, at the center of my community, I jumped at the chance. No way would it be red geraniums and white petunias! With purple cone flowers already in front of half the townhouses, putting natives back in could be the only choice.

The plant list was key and required a lot of thought, from consideration of the number of plants needed (approximately 350), to the question of spacing requirements, to all the readjustment of plans when plants were unavailable or too expensive (plugs being the most affordable). The site called for sun-loving plants, and, as a nod toward water conservation, drought tolerance. There were small shady areas under the trees. Plants could not be too aggressive, or, when at full size, too large, and, very importantly, something had to be blooming spring through fall. Although I had checked the soil, many plants were already on order when it became obvious that the clay content was much higher than initially observed. I consulted many books, Wild Ones online, Prairie Moon Nursery, and Art Gara of Art & Linda's Wildflowers (a local native plant supplier) was a huge help.

The Townhouse Board was satisfied to have an able body willing to see a garden project through, start to finish. Site diagrams and a plant height-and-bloom-season graph, along with a brief mention of the rave reviews given to the newly installed Leery Gardens in Millennium Park in Chicago, assured confidence in the project. Given my preliminary budget details, my extensive list of plants (including a no-rodent/deer-attracting-varieties caveat), and my expressed desire to put the financial resources wholly into

plants and materials, using volunteer labor, the project was deemed appealing enough to get the ball rolling. Once the budget was approved, the importance of volunteers and preparing the site moved to the forefront.

No way would it be red geraniums and white pentunias! Putting natives back in could be the only choice.

It was already May, and we were behind schedule. The project should have been planned and approved in March. It was a bit tough, acquiring desired plants so late in the game (especially spring bloomers), and even tougher dealing with the quickly growing non-natives that had to be treated and removed while the weather was heating up. In the end, three different vendors supplied the desired plants. Many were purchased at the Wolf Road Prairie Benefit Sale through Art & Linda's Wildflowers.

The community mindset, where people had made a conscious choice to dispense with gardening and yards, made recruiting the volunteers difficult. This shortage of volunteers made for a longer execution time frame. With rolled-up sleeves and an armload of flyers, I recruited. The people who showed up pitched in with enthusiasm for their surroundings, and became my best neighbors. They were wonderfully encouraging individuals with busy lives of their own. And one neighbor in particular, named Tony, who had landscaping contacts, experience, and a huge energy level, was an invaluable resource.

Not unexpectedly, issues came up. To track down sprinkler pipes, we had hoped to find blueprints that would show location, depth, and all control valves. Unfortunately, we had to literally dig for our information. To placate concerned neighbors we took extra time replanting the clumping ornamental grasses. Digging up the rhizomatous grid of grass and weeds was really tough. Though augmenting the soil is not recommended, and we had opted not to rototill, we did want give our plant plugs an excellent chance of survival. We strategically worked bags of topsoil, sand, and compost into our clay foundation. Site preparation took place from 8:30 a.m. to dusk, over two weekends.

Meanwhile, I watched the plants in plug trays visibly grow in the shade of my front yard. I diligently kept them moist, and watched for signs of trouble, worrying for their welfare every day they had to wait. Finally the circle, our planting site, was ready. Following the prepared diagram, with prescribed distance between plants, we did the best we could. Every time I pushed clumpy clay against young roots, I silently wished them luck.

Organizing a plant rescue from an area being developed nearby, we waited for rain so the plants wouldn't be too stressed. Volunteers were very enthusiastic about this aspect of the project. I woke up early and dug all the holes where the transplants would be planted, and poured in topsoil/sand/compost before we left for the rescue. My friends from PRP came with buckets and extra shovels. Digging at the rescue site was like shoveling in concrete – at least we knew the plants would be accustomed to high-clay content. Our rescue yielded primarily prairie dropseed, little bluestem, and four rattlesnake masters. I placed the plants on the prepared mounds, and the volunteers merely turned the soil a bit. The rain came just as the last couple were being tamped down.

I told the board what to expect, and followed through with a newsletter blurb for the residents. The plants would take nearly three years to mature, they would need to be cut back early spring to accommodate butterflies, and the tree branches would have to

be pruned. The contract gardeners would not spray the site – I would continue weeding since recognition of species was necessary.

Using the sprinkler system was necessary the first year. But, being able to control the amount of water served us well. Surrounded by cement, with little drainage, the plants were actually saved by the drought. As each one bloomed that first year (2005), they seemed like little miracles – the Missouri sundrops unfurling their huge petals, royal catchfly winking red, prairie violets and purple prairie clover putting out seed – and in fall the bottle gentian adding spots of brilliant blue. But in 2006, when in early summer the hoary puccoon and then the butterfly weed erupted, I was overjoyed. When the early season flowers peaked, the yellow cone flower, wild bergamot, and blue vervain would take their place while we awaited the stalks of liatris, aster and the warm season tall grasses.

As the garden matures my neighbors appreciate it more. For my part, from cool to warm season and back again, I find new species emerging from the soil of the rescued plants – indian grass, big blue stem, obedient plant, tiny lobelia, mountain mint, wool and panic grass – with butterflies, bees, dragonflies and goldfinches always flitting about. The idea of prairie must be catching on, we have it right here in town now. ★

Plants from

Art & Linda's Wildflowers / Wolf Road Prairie Benefit

Prairie Moon Nursery

Possibility Place

Prairie Rescue (includes some yet unidentified grass/sedge/rush)

Note: Art & Linda's Wildflowers is a business member of Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter, and Prairie Moon Nursery is a partner-at-large business member.

Books

Where the Sky Began, John Madson

Miracle Under the Oaks, William K. Stevens

A Natural History of the Chicago Region, Joel Greenberg

Plants of the Chicago Region, Floyd Swink and Gerould Wilhelm

A Falcon Guide: Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers, Ladd/Oberle

Gardening with Prairie Plants, Sally Wasowski

Native Plants in the Home Landscape in the Upper Midwest, Keith Gerart Nowakowski

100 Easy-to-Grow Native Plants, Lorraine Johnson

Happy Birthday, Lorrie!
♦ ♦ ♦

Two years ago we established
a Seeds for Education fundraising
initiative in honor of Lorrie Otto's birthday.

Her birthday is in September, and she will be 88.

Please send your gifts by September 5th so we can get your cards and letters to Lorrie in time for her birthday. You can download a special birthday card for Lorrie at www.for-wild.org/download/bd/lorriebirthday.html You can download a special birthday card for Lorrie, and make your contribution online at www.for-wild.org/download/bd/lorriebirthday.html. And don't forget to remind your fellow members and chapter boards alike to send their contributions to the Seeds for Education Grant Program, in honor of Lorrie. Let's make this a really excellent year for her.

ART AND NATURE AT AMERMAN ELEMENTARY

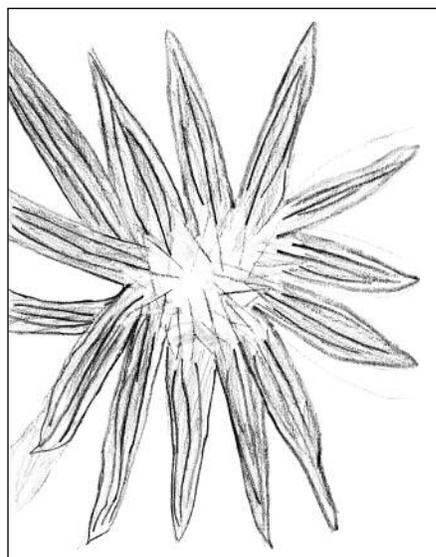
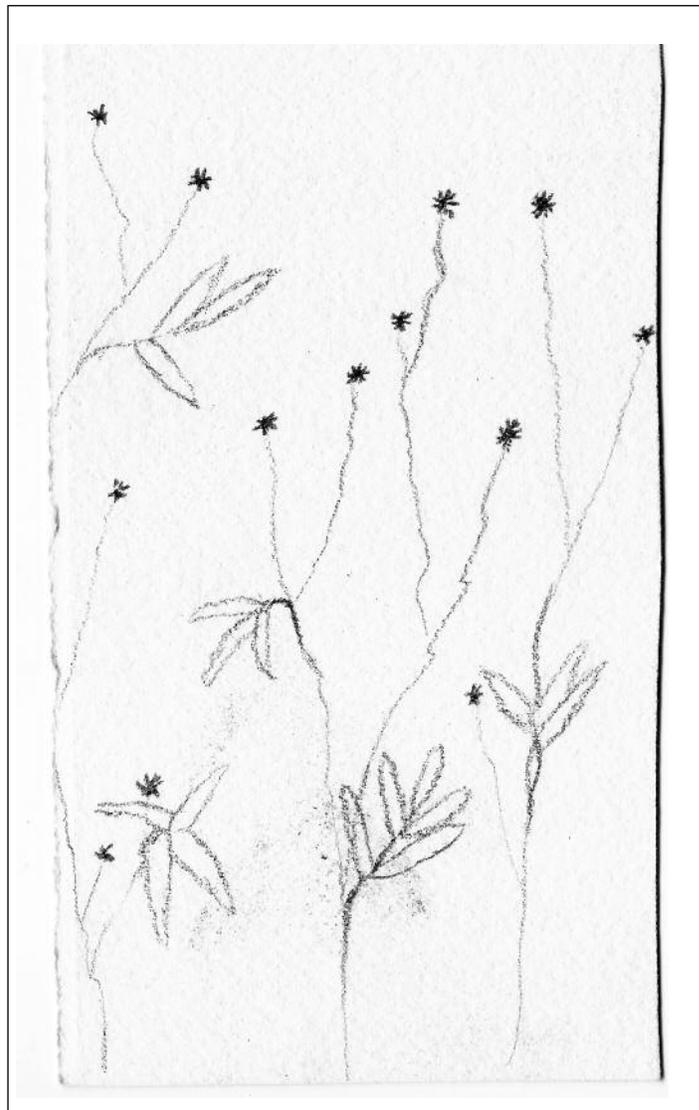
By Celia Larsen

The Amerman Elementary PTA (Northville, Michigan) initiated an after-school "Art Club" several years ago. While the students have a once a week art class during school, the parents who organized the Art Club realized the need for further experiences with local professional artists. Classes have included animation, sculpture and architecture, and filmmaking among a variety of others. I have had the pleasure of twice co-teaching "Art and Nature" in the fall of 2005 and 2006. As a botanist, I fell more into the "Nature" aspect of the class, while the artists I taught with provided assistance with creative techniques. Artists know about terms like "contour" and "composition." I know terms like "hirsute" and "inflorescence." But when teaching elementary students, most terms simply don't matter. The botanist and the artist behave similarly in the opinion of an elementary student – they both observe all the small details of the natural world. We both see yellow, round, heart-shaped leaves (red bud), fuzzy, green, serrated leaves (hazelnut) or pointed, leathery, brown leaves (red oak). So together, botanist and artist, we help the students become better observers while having a whole lot of fun whether drawing, sculpting, or making a collage.

Amerman Elementary fortunately has a large native plant courtyard and a 1/2-acre woodlot across the street at Hillside Middle School, providing us with two wonderful options for outdoor learning. We met once a week for an hour and a half for eight weeks, and covered the following material:

- Andy Goldsworthy's temporary outdoor sculptures. Internationally acclaimed artist, Andy Goldsworthy, creates beautiful and transitory outdoor sculptures. We showed the students some of his work in pictures, and had them create their own. Some built forts, some built fairy houses, some made plates of "food" for the birds – others made symmetrical patterns with leaves and stones and twigs.
- Big and Little Drawings: Students explored in the courtyard looking for something small enough to fit in the palm of their hand (e.g., aster flower, hemlock cone), and something bigger than themselves (e.g., maple tree, American cranberry bush). Then they drew the little thing on a big piece of paper, and the big thing on a little piece of paper.
- Leaf Rubbings and Leaf Prints: Students created leaf rubbings books and monoprints using leaves as the image. Some even made a leaf crown. Some made leaf "fairies" using leaves and other natural things to create people on paper. Students also made leaf-contour drawings using the actual leaf as center image and working out.
- Sculpture with nature: Little things like sticks, leaves, acorns, seed pods, etc. make great sculptures. All you need is a little glue and lots of imagination.

The students did not learn the names of all the plants we used. I did not lecture them about invasive species. They now have a fondness for a small patch of woods and a native plant courtyard. They have felt the cool smooth skin of a puffball mushroom, and smelled the pungent leaves of spicebush. They have seen and touched a large variety of our native tree and shrub leaves. We believe they have become better observers of nature. And we're looking forward to watching spring unfold together. ★



Second-grader Max Ortlieb's "Big and Little" drawings: The entire stem of what is clearly a spindly, tall coreopsis was drawn on a small piece of paper (above). The blossom of a New England aster was drawn on a large sheet (left). The child's perceptions and representations are quite extraordinary.

Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Thoughts, ideas, and clarifications.

Wild Ones Presidents

Wild Ones will have a new National President when Carol Andrews is inducted at the Annual Meeting in Dayton, Ohio, on Saturday, August 16.

I read Joe's final "Notes" with a deep sense of appreciation for his style of leadership. True to form, Joe said "What have we accomplished during my term?"

This is a good time for us to remember that the President does not work alone. He or she is not a one-person force. We all work together to make things happen. This same idea is expressed in the fact that Joe had a "traveling administration," in taking the quarterly meetings to the chapters. That is something that would not have happened without the President's instigation and the direct cooperation of our Executive Director, our other National Board members, and the local chapter's board members. This was an action that brought us together – made each a direct part of the administration. We have excellent people in leadership roles in our organization.

Each president brings to the office his or her own style. Welcome, Carol.

Clusters of flowers draw more buzz-y-ness than solitary specimens

UC Professor of Entomology, Gordon Frankie, has been studying urban gardens in the San Francisco area for a number of years. Here are some of his observations about bees:

- At least 76 species of bees (73 natives and 3 exotics) have been collected from urban residential areas of Albany and N. Berkeley, in northern California.
- Native California bees are six times more likely to visit native California plants than exotics. They do also go to weedy exotics for nectar and pollen, especially if the plants are part of a family that has many native representatives (eg., *Asteraceae*). Frankie recommends tolerating these plants through their flowering cycle, then yanking them before they set seed.
- Urban bees are unevenly distributed in urban neighborhoods. Gardens with 10 or more attractive bee plants flowering simultaneously had the highest bee diversity and abundance. By comparison, attractive bee

plants that are isolated in gardens attract a lower diversity and abundance of bees.

- Apart from the social bumblebees, 70 percent of native bees are solitary, nesting either in cavities in deadwood or tunnels in the soil. Therefore, leave some deadwood around your garden, and avoid MM and BPI – (Mulch Madness) and (Black Plastic Insanity) – leave some bare soil.

The buzz buzz on Capitol Hill

The Pollinator Protection Act, recently introduced in the Senate, would direct USDA offices to hand out conservation funds to help and encourage producers to develop wildlife habitat, and to develop farming practices that could benefit pollinators. Such activity could entail something as simple as leaving permanent buffer strips running through their farm field.

Sounds like old fashioned hedge-rows to me. Perhaps we need to suggest that these strips be dedicated to native flowering plants.

Memorable quotes are best served straight up

Albert Einstein has been quoted as saying that humanity could not survive more than four years without pollinators. Edward O. Wilson, the Harvard professor, naturalist, and ant researcher, is said to have stated that without pollinators, humans would only live a few months. Cell phones are said to mess up honey bees.

For the record, what E. O. Wilson wrote was, "So important are insects and other land dwelling arthropods, that if all were to disappear, humanity probably could not last more than a few months." (*The Diversity of Life*, p. 133) This is quite different from only pollinators disappearing.

The Einstein quote has been debunked by the Einstein Archives at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Never said it.

As for cell phones being responsible for Colony Collapse Disorder of honey bees, this "original research" was based on two hives into which *not* cell phones, but rather the base units of household cordless phones had been introduced.

I don't know the name of the wag who suggested that bees, being social creatures, would probably appreciate cell phones...

"People believe what they want to believe." Some wise, and many not-so-wise, folks have made this observation – especially when facts are scarce and the situation is scary.

WILD ONES IN THE NEWS

Lesa Beamer's yard was featured in the Columbia (MO) *Home & Lifestyle* magazine, June-July 2006 issue. The article stated that Lesa has been a member of the Audubon Society since she was 12 years old. So when she moved to Columbia eight years ago and bought a house, she planted gardens that are for the birds.

Missouri plants, she says, work best. "Native plants are what the birds expect," says Beamer, associate professor of biochemistry at the University of Missouri-Columbia and vice-president of the local chapter of Wild Ones, an organization designed to promote the use of native plants in landscaping. Lesa was also charter president of the **Mid-Missouri (MO) Chapter**.

Charlotte Adelman, co-author of *Prairie Directory of North America*, and a member of the **North Park Nature Center (IL) Chapter**, was recently featured in a CBS2 Chicago TV segment titled, "Chemicals Used in the Quest for a Perfect Lawn Could be Killers." To see the entire feature, check out the CBS2-Chicago video library at <http://cbs2chicago.com/video/?id=32311@wbbm.dayport.com>.

Recently, on the Minneapolis television station KARE 11, on a program called "Minnesota Bound," **Prairie Restorations**, Wild Ones business member from Princeton, Minnesota, was featured. The 12-15 minute segment showed their beautiful prairie plantings, prairie yards they've planted for customers, their "greenhouses" at their facility, and told about how they got started, and showing them planting their seeds. At one point in the interview, the owner, **Ron Bowen**, talked about his hopes for the continuation of this movement.



THISTLES

The Paradoxical Plants By Marianne L. Hahn



Left to right: Blossoms, upper (adaxial) side of leaf, and under (abaxial) side of leaf of *Cirsium discolor*, *C. muticum*, and *C. altissimum*.

I need go no farther than my kitchen cupboard for a water glass to find the image of thistle flowers beautifully cut into the glass. Indeed, thistle flowers and leaves are widely used for ornamentation on house wares and buildings. Look closely at architect Louis Sullivan's decorative building entrances, friezes, and cornices, and thistles are bound to be present. Thistles are the national emblem of Scotland, chosen because they saved the country from an invasion by Danish forces in 1263. The Danes were sneaking up on a Scottish encampment when everyone was asleep. One of the invaders stepped on a thistle, responded loudly, and woke the Scots in time to respond. Which brings us to the first paradox – how can such a beautiful plant inflict such pain?

The thistle flower is actually a cluster of numerous disk flowers – accordingly, it is classified as a member of the family *Compositae* (or *Asteraceae*, depending on which book you consult). Unlike other members of this family, such as daisies and sunflowers, thistles lack the colorful rays (“He loves me, he loves me not” petals), and have only the densely

packed central florets. Each little purple floret is loaded with nectar, making thistles a favorite of butterflies and bees. Each fertilized floret later produces a seed, which American Goldfinches devour as soon as they form. Thus, another paradox – many gardeners abhor thistles, yet the plants support such beautiful and desirable garden additions. Indeed, goldfinches not only eat the seeds, they nest late in the season and line their tiny cup-shaped nests with thistle down.

Several species of thistle are native to the prairies, marshes and woodlands of the Midwest (*See sidebar*). One species that grows only in the sand dunes of the Great Lakes, dune thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*) is listed as a federally-threatened species. Hill's thistle (*Cirsium hillii*) is listed as threatened or endangered on the state lists for Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin. On the other hand, Canada thistle, a non-native that is from Europe – not from Canada – spreads by rhizomes and seeds, and can form huge colonies in fairly wet or dry soils. It displaces native plants in prairie restorations, and is an agricultural pest, appear-

ing on the noxious weed list of many states. But here's the biggest irony of all: swamp thistle (*Cirsium muticum*) is listed as threatened by the state of Arkansas, which lists all species of the genus *Cirsium* as noxious weeds.

Identification of the thistles native to the Midwest is quite simple. If the underside of leaves is whitened by dense short hairs, the thistle is native, with one exception, namely, alien bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*). However, most native thistles will pass the “bare hand” test, and bull thistle will not. What's the “bare hand” test? If you gently grasp the leaves of a native thistle close to the ground, and slowly draw your bare hand up the plant, you will feel little or no pain. You cannot do that with Canada thistle without drawing blood – and with bull thistle, the spines are so long and robust that you cannot do it even with a gloved hand.

If you think you might like to add the beauty of thistles to a native planting, check first to see if the species is listed as a noxious weed in your jurisdiction. If not listed, it should be legal to grow native species. A check of the catalogs

for two major suppliers of native plants in the Midwest turned up neither plants nor seeds of thistles. That probably means you'd have to start plants from seed that you collect. Unless you have a written permit, collecting seeds of threatened or endangered species could get you into serious trouble, so be sure you can identify what you collect. If you do find flower heads of a native species along a public right of way, and if the goldfinches have not beaten you to the seeds, it should be OK to gather some. In a year or two, you could be enjoying the beauty of butterflies nectaring on your very own native, natural birdfeeder. ★

Native Thistles of the Midwest

Tall Thistle (*Cirsium altissimum*). Can be found in woodlands or prairies. Least spiny of all.

Pasture Thistle (*Cirsium discolor*). A tough prairie plant that survives in pastures, weedy fields, roadsides, etc.

Prairie Thistle (*Cirsium hillii*). Sports a large flowerhead on a 2-1/2 foot plant. Don't do "bare hand" test on this one.

Swamp Thistle (*Cirsium muticum*). Include this in a wetland restoration.

Dune Thistle (*Cirsium pitcheri*). A trip to the dunes may be rewarded with this rare sighting.

Non-Native Thistles

Nodding Thistle (*Carduus nutans*). Big, beautiful, pink powderpuffs top off a huge, aggressive, very spiny plant.

Canada Thistle, Field Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*). The most invasive thistle species. Small but very numerous flowers.

Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*). A cactus is easier to handle!



These leaves of pasture thistle may look prickly, but are quite soft.

Opening Up a Can of (EXOTIC WORMS)

Non-Native Earthworms Changing Northern Hardwood Forests

By June Kallestad

Gardeners covet earthworms for their composting abilities. Anglers dangle them on hooks. Kids giggle as they wiggle around in their hands. But many people don't realize that in the northern, glaciated regions of North America, the common earthworms we know and love are really exotic European invaders.

Earthworms hitchhiked over the ocean a few centuries ago with European immigrants, and quickly made themselves at home. Their fast composting abilities speed up the nutrient cycling of organic material by eating the forest floor and mixing it with the mineral soil below. In worm-free conditions, fungi and bacteria decompose the forest floor slowly. Once exotic earthworms establish large populations, the forest floor is replaced with a dense layer of black soil – the kind you might want in your garden – but the change is hard on native forest plants.

Dr. Cindy Hale, a scientist with the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI), collaborates with researchers across the region to study the impact of exotic earthworms across the western Great Lakes region in different types of forests.

"We established sample points way out in front of the invasion in the worm-free areas, and also behind the leading edge where we see heavily worm-impacted areas," Hale explained. "Since starting this project in 1998, we've monitored the advance of earthworm populations and changes in the forest floor, soil structure, and plant populations...so we can see the direct effects of the worms as they move into the forest."

University of Minnesota doctoral candidate Andy Holdsworth is documenting the mosaic of worm-free and worm-impacted areas across the Chippewa (Minnesota) and Chequamegon (Wisconsin) National Forests. He's finding that the more human recreational activities taking place, the more exotic species of worms there are. It's clear that people are spreading exotic worms when they go fishing. Holdsworth also noted that carpets of sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*) are more abundant in worm-rich areas. Hale's studies in the spruce-fir-boreal forests of Voyageurs National Park (Minnesota) and the beech forests of Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (Michigan), show that different forest types support varying populations of worms, resulting in different impacts on the forests.

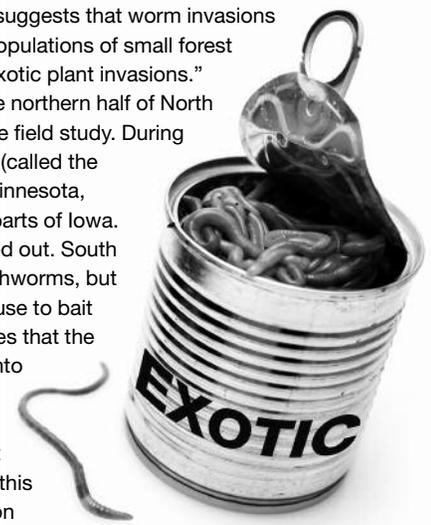
"The changes these worms make can be dramatic, despite their low key appearance in the forest," Hale explained. "We've seen other data that suggests that worm invasions can lead to declines in soil invertebrates, changing populations of small forest mammals and amphibians, and may even facilitate exotic plant invasions."

There are up to 14 non-native worm species in the northern half of North America, eight of which have been documented in the field study. During the last glaciation period 10,000 to 14,000 years ago (called the Wisconsin glaciation), ice sheets covered Canada, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, North and South Dakota, and parts of Iowa. In all of those areas the native earthworms were wiped out. South of that ice sheet there are native North American earthworms, but they are very different from the ones we northerners use to bait our hooks. It's just been in the last two to four decades that the European earthworms have begun to find their way into remote areas that were previously worm free.

"How the forests will adapt to these worms is anyone's guess at this point," said Hale. "That's what makes this research so interesting. When we started this project six years ago, there was almost no research on earthworms in Minnesota." ★



The dark line on this map shows the likely southern limits of the most-recent ice age.



through imported Chinese or Japanese chestnut trees.

Exotic plants pose the second-greatest threat to native vegetation, after land clearing for development and farming. About 200 native plant species have become extinct since the 1800s, and 5,000 species are at risk, according to the Plant Conservation Alliance. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates 42 percent of the country's endangered and threatened species have declined as a result of encroaching exotic plants and animals.

From the beginning, many exotic plants were introduced to North America through landscaping. Settlers transferred their favorite plants from the Old World in an effort to create familiar environments. Intentional and accidental introductions are even more likely today, Voorhis says, thanks to the ease of international travel and trade. "Our global economy has accelerated the growth of exotics," he says. "It used to be wildlife that moved plant species," at a slow rate that allowed the natural environment to adapt. "Now it's jumbo jets."

While some exotic plants are not considered harmful, invasive exotics spread rapidly, destroying habitat for native plants and eventually entire ecosystems. Purple loosestrife, for instance, is taking over wetlands in the Northeast and north-central regions of the United States, and is headed west. English ivy is forming a thick ground cover in the forests of the Southeast, Middle Atlantic, and Pacific Northwest, preventing the growth of native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. Kudzu has suffocated 7 million acres of native vegetation in the South.

Invasive exotics gain a quick foothold because their natural pests, predators, and diseases usually don't exist in foreign regions, Voorhis says. They harm native ecosystems not only by taking over their habitat, but also by harboring pathogens to which native plants have no immunity – as in the chestnut blight – and by sending out toxins that can be lethal to native plants and

insects. Garlic mustard, for instance, contains compounds fatal to a native butterfly species.

The factors that make exotic plants dangerous to native environments also make them hardy and easy to grow – traits Voorhis says make them popular for landscaping.

Danielle Green, environmental protection specialist for the Environmental Protection Agency, encourages people to find out what plant species are invasive in their states, and avoid them. "In my talks, I tell people, 'At the least, do no harm,'" says Green, who promotes the use of native plants, and is a member of the North Park Nature Center (IL) Chapter.

An internet search for the terms "exotic plants" and your state's name will likely provide a list of invasive exotics. Most states also have invasive-plant councils with information on the internet.

The staunchest supporters of native landscaping discourage planting even non-invasive exotics, as every exotic plant limits space for natives.

An ethical obligation?

The scientific evidence begs the question: Could the plant growers, contractors and architects who see themselves as environmentally friendly to the point they call their collective group the "green industry" actually be harming the environment? Rappaport says the answer, to some extent, is yes. "If you're pushing, planting, and

The staunchest supporters of native landscaping discourage planting even non-invasive exotics. Every exotic plant limits space for natives, the Plant Conservation Alliance states on its web site.

cultivating exotics, you're not 'green' except to the extent that your goal is to make money," he says. "The only environmentally friendly landscape is the one that nature intended to be 'of the place.' Sure, a lawn with (Chinese) ginkgoes may be better than a parking lot, but not much."

Rohlfes, with the California Landscape Contractors Association, says contractors have little control over what they plant. "We give the public what the public wants," he says. "It's not a matter of what we like." [Editor's Note: There is an aspect to this scenario that is not immediately obvious. The customer can only choose from what the landscape contractor can get from his supplier, the nursery. If the customer is not made aware of the existence and the virtues of locally native plants, he or she cannot ask for them, and business goes on as usual. This cycle is being broken by organizations like Wild Ones, who work to make the consumer aware of the palette of native plants, and of sources of these plants – our nursery advertisers and business partners, for example.]

But Rappaport says landscape professionals have a great deal of influence with their clients. "What they suggest, a customer will likely do," he says.

Although she has a well-publicized interest in native plants, Carol Lindsay, owner of design firm Urban Renaissance in Portland, Oregon, says it's not her place to use that influence. "It is not my job to convince or tell people what they should have in their landscape as some sort of religious mission," she says. "It is my job to learn about what they are interested in, not form their views."

That said, Lindsay acknowledges native landscaping is what a large percentage of people in the Northwest want. They usually don't know much about the plants – or even which ones are native – but they come to her with the concept. Others want a low-maintenance, low-water-using landscape that attracts wildlife, and that can be achieved with native plants.

Bill Oliphant, a semi-retired landscape architect, and an adviser for Tremont's native landscaping certification program, understands both sides of the



Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), a fast-spreading invasive, can easily take over wetlands like this one, resulting in loss of native species. Photo: Eric Coombs, Oregon Department of Agriculture.

argument. Oliphant has been an advocate of native plants his entire 40-year career, but says fulfilling clients' expectations comes first. In a recent residential project, for instance, the homeowner wanted instant ground cover around a paved entertainment area. No native material would do the job, so Oliphant resorted to a non-invasive exotic.

Native plant promoters – including those within the landscaping industry – say most landscape contractors could and should be doing more to protect natural environments. "It's the duty of people in that field to lead the charge in dealing with this problem," Voorhis says.

Most landscape contractors don't have a strong educational background in native plants, says Mike Stanley, of Michael Stanley Landscapes in Deerfield, Illinois. Stanley specializes in native plantings, but also designs, installs, and maintains traditional landscapes. "A lot of us forget why we got into this business to begin with," he says. "It's to preserve things and protect things."

Pizzo also says many landscape contractors are uninformed about native plants, but says few are willfully so. Design and business issues crowd their schedules, leaving little time for education. And even if they do find time, educational opportunities are scarce. While information about a new petunia variety abounds, there's little about how native plants react in a landscape, Pizzo says.

J. J. Sweeney, owner of Salamander Designs in Portland, Oregon, says overall environmental awareness is having an impact on landscape contractors in her area,

and some are coming into the industry with a desire to use native plants. "Some of the older, well-established contractors are starting to see the light as well, partly because of consumer demand and because those of us designers specializing in sustainable landscaping have made a concerted effort to educate others," she says.

The business case for natural landscaping

Stanley says specializing in native plants sets his business apart. After seeing the same materials used in landscape after landscape, potential clients are intrigued by colorful native grasses and plants that provide habitat for birds, he says. "People like to be a little different here," Stanley says. "No one wants to be mainstream."

Stanley says interest in native landscaping is growing as people realize they don't see wildlife as much as they used to and their children have never seen a grasshopper or a field of native blue stem.

"It's starting to get into people's minds," Pizzo says. "They're making simple correlations, like 'I don't see butterflies anymore,'" he says. Or they read a *National Geographic* article about threatened ecosystems, and note how long it's been since they've seen a frog.

Pizzo says the market for native landscaping is small even in the Midwest, which is 10 to 15 years ahead of most of the country in terms of ecological consciousness, but it's growing. "It's going to rise and it's going to rise fast," he says.

"It's going to reach critical mass."

In the Northwest, another hot spot for native landscaping, Lindsay says it makes good business sense for landscape designers and contractors to learn to work with indigenous plants. "The under-40 crowd here in the Northwest is very interested in the concept of green," she says. "It would be foolish to not pursue knowledge of the native landscape and how to provide this for your clients."

Pizzo has several corporate clients, and says native landscaping is especially attractive to businesses. They save money on maintenance, and can point to their campus as evidence of an environmental ethic.

"They really are walking the walk," he says. McDonald's; Sears, Roebuck & Co.; and Promega, a biotech company in Madison, Wisconsin, are just a few corporations that have used native landscaping at their headquarters.

Regional character

Pizzo thinks the Midwest leads the native-landscaping movement because, ironically, Illinois and Iowa rank 49th and 50th in quantity of natural areas. In the '60s and '70s, people started saying "My God, we're the prairie state and we don't have any prairies left," he says.

This longing for regional character is driving the natural-landscaping movement in other states as well. People live in certain areas because they like the natural surroundings, Pizzo says. They move to Arizona for the giant saguaro cactus, and to eastern Tennessee for the mountains

and deciduous forests. And they're beginning to question why landscapes look the same all over the county. Those who live in the desert and are depleting water sources with bluegrass lawns are beginning to ask themselves why they're doing so, Pizzo says.

Rappaport, with Wild Ones, says there are two primary reasons: an antiquated desire to replicate the rolling lawns of England, and industry's push to sell things needed to maintain exotic landscapes. "It's what we know," he says. "It's what we've always had."

Rappaport is confident people will eventually conclude native landscapes are cheaper and better. "It's going to happen," he says. "There's no reason for it not to."

Pizzo says that doesn't have to be a bad thing for the landscaping industry. Native landscapes require less maintenance than traditional ones, but even natural areas require stewardship, he says. "If you're a good ecologist, your clients will pay you to manage their site," he says.

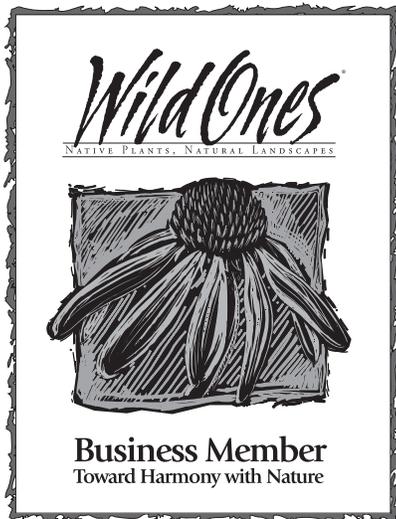
Landscape contractors are realizing they can maintain their profit levels with native landscaping, and have peace of mind knowing they're protecting wildlife and plants, Pizzo says. "This is the greening of the green industry," he says. ★

Reprinted with permission from *Total Landscape Care: The New Alternative for Professional Landscapers*, March, 2007.



Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*), spreads inexorably, mostly through soil movement and vegetative growth, and kills trees by shading them. Photo: Kerry Britton, USDA Forest Service.

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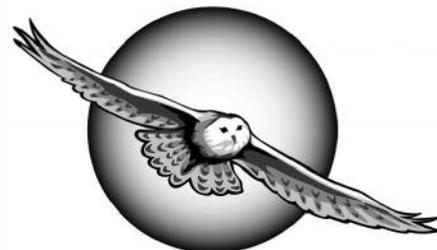
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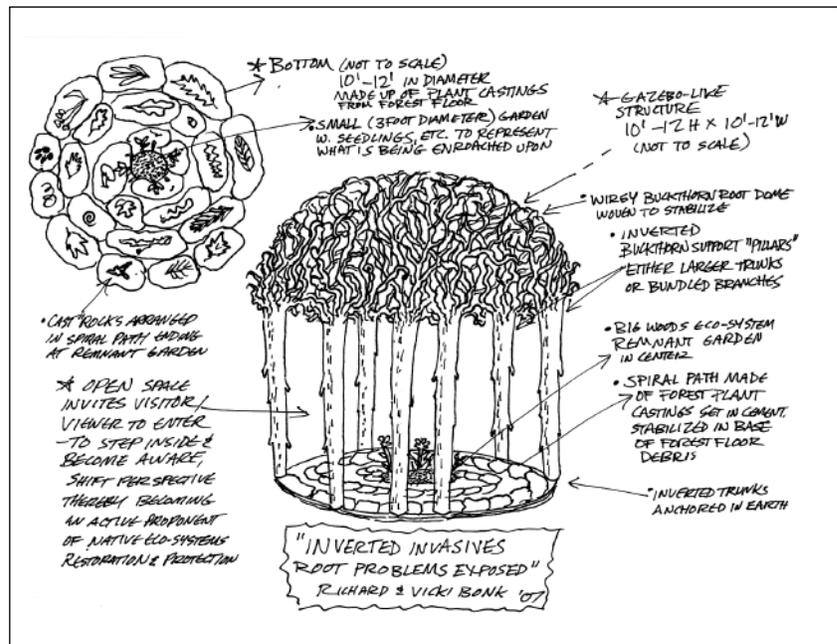
Chapter Notes



The 2007, Second Quarterly National Board Meeting was hosted by **Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter** on May 5th, at Sharon Mills County Park in Ann Arbor. 18 members of local Michigan chapters joined us for this meeting. It was a wonderful opportunity for networking between the chapters and National, and we had some great discussions.

Many chapters are participating in community projects this year. **Flint River (MI) Chapter** is helping to beautify Genesee County's Northeast Village, and is also helping to design the new native garden at the I-75 rest stop. They are working with the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Louisville Metro (KY) Chapter is removing *Ailanthus* and non-native *Lonicera* from their adopted woodland in Cherokee Park.



Twin Cities (MN) Chapter is working with Wild Ones members **Cindy and Richard Bonk** on their artwork (shown above), titled "Stepping Stones for Inverted Invasives," for the summer exhibit on the beautiful grounds of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Each summer the arboretum features projects promoting native plant awareness through environmental artwork.

Wild Ones Photo Contest 2007

Don't forget to be taking photos of all the great sights you see every day as you're out enjoying the wonderful diversity of the natural landscape, and send your best photos to the Wild Ones 2007 Photo Contest.

This year we have increased the number of photos each person may enter, and don't forget the special category for kids up to age 18 to show us their views of natural landscapes.

There are six categories, and all Wild Ones members can submit up to four entries with no more than two entries per category (each person under a household or business membership may enter).

Deadline for receipt of mailed submissions is August 10, 2007. Photo contest entries personally delivered to the Wild Ones Annual Meeting/Conference in Dayton, Ohio, should arrive no later than 4:00 p.m. on August 17, 2007.

For more information go to www.for-wild.org/conference/2007/photo/ or call the National Office at 877-394-9453.



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CONNECTICUT

Mountain Laurel Chapter #78
Kathy T. Dame 860-439-2144
ktdam@conncoll.edu

ILLINOIS

Greater DuPage Chapter #9
Pat Clancy 630-964-0448, clancypj@sbcglobal.net

Lake-To-Prairie Chapter #11
Karen Wisiol 847-548-1650, kawisiol@pcbb.net

Macomb Chapter #42 (Seedling)
Margaret Ovit 309-836-6231 card@macomb.com

North Park Chapter #27
Rick and Wilma McCallister
rich.mccallister@utstar.com

Rock River Valley Chapter #21
Constance McCarthy 815-282-0316
kublai Khan@mac.com

INDIANA

Gibson Woods Chapter #38
Joy Bower 219-844-3188 jbower1126@aol.com

KENTUCKY

Lexington Chapter #64
Jackie Wilson wilsundance@yahoo.com

Louisville Metrowild Chapter #26
Rick Harned 502-897-2485 r.harned@insightbb.com
wildones-lou@insightbb.com

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor Chapter #3
Susan Bryan 734-622-9997
susanbryanhsieh@yahoo.com

Calhoun County Chapter #39
Carol Spanninga 517-857-3766
spanninga8@hotmail.com

Central Upper Peninsula Chapter #61
Tom Tauzer 906-428-3203 ttauzer@chartermi.net

Detroit Metro Chapter #47
Connie Manley 248-538-0654
cmanfarm@nich.distance.net

Flint River Chapter #32
Thomas Enright taenright@comcast.net

Grand Rapids Chapter #83 (Seedling)
Carol Phelps 616-233-0833

Houghton-Hancock Chapter #60 (Seedling)
Kristine Bradof 906-482-0446 kbradof@mtu.edu

Kalamazoo Area Chapter #37
Tom Small 269-381-4946 yard2prairy@aol.com
Paul Olexia polexia@kzoo.edu

Michigan's Thumb Area (Seedling)
Diane Santhany dsanthany@hotmail.com

Mid-Mitten Chapter #80
Judy Packard 989-686-1231
jpwild1s@limitlesspath.com

Oakland Chapter #34
Barbara Bray 248-601-6405
brayfamily@netscape.com

Red Cedar Chapter #41
Sue Millar 517-675-5665 spmillar@aol.com

MINNESOTA

Arrowhead Chapter #48
Carol Andrews 218-529-8204
carol_andrews@hotmail.com

Otter Tail Chapter #25
Brad Ehlers 218-998-3590 frostbit@prtcl.com

St. Cloud Chapter #29
Greg Shirley 320-259-0825 shirley198@charter.net

St. Croix Oak Savanna Chapter #71
Diane Hilscher 651-436-3836
hilscherdesign@comcast.net
Roger Miller st.croix.wild.ones@mac.com

Twin Cities Chapter #56
Roberta Moore 952-891-8956
mylesmom@charter.net

MISSOURI

Mid-Missouri Chapter #49
Scott Hamilton 573-882-9909 x3257
scott.hamilton@mdc.mo.gov

St. Louis Chapter #31
Marilyn Chryst 314-845-2497 tchryst@swbell.net

NEW YORK

Habitat Gardening in Central New York #76
Janet Allen 315-487-5742
hg.cny@verizon.net

Niagara Frontier Wildlife Habitat Council Chapter #82
Michelle Vanstrom 716-745-7625
vanshel400@aol.com

OHIO

Greater Cincinnati Chapter #62
Roberta Trombly 513-542-0893,
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Chris McCullough: 513-860-4959,
gordchris@fuse.net

Columbus Chapter #4
Shelby Conrad 614-784-1992
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Toledo Chapter #77
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PENNSYLVANIA

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Fox Valley Area Chapter #8
Karen Syverson 920-987-5587 ksyve@core.com

Green Bay Chapter #10
James Havel jhavel@releeinc.com
Veronique VanGheem vangheem@releeinc.com

Lake Woods Chapter #72
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flower_power@wildmail.com

Madison Chapter #13
Laurie J. Yahr 608-274-6593
yahrkahl@sbcglobal.net

Menomonee River Area Chapter #16
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Root River Area Chapter #43
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All members are invited and encouraged to attend the quarterly meetings of the National Board of Directors. If you'd like to participate in the meeting by conference call, please contact the National Office (toll-free) at 877-394-9453 for instructions.

2nd Quarter 2007 National Board Meeting will be hosted by Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter on **May 5th at Sharon Mills County Park in Ann Arbor**, and will include presentations from local SFE Grant recipients. Following the meeting, participants will explore the Nature Conservancy's Nan Weston Nature Preserve at Sharon Hollow, about 20 miles southwest of Ann Arbor. This is a spectacular site for spring ephemerals, and blooms will be at their peak. It's a botanical hot spot with an incredible abundance of wildflowers and native shrubs. A combination of dry and floodplain habitats (on the Raisin River) make for diversity and excitement. New boardwalks provide drier footing than has been had in previous years.

3rd Quarter Meeting of 2007 and Annual Meeting will be held Friday evening and Saturday afternoon respectively, the weekend of **August 17-19th**, hosted by the Greater Cin-

cinnati (OH) Chapter, at **Bergamo Center at Mt. Saint John Preserve in Dayton, Ohio**. This is a great place, with much to do there and in the surrounding areas. There will be plenty to do outside and people can tour the grounds as they like – it is a very peaceful setting. We are hoping we can allow "down" time for networking and getting to know each other as well. For more information: www.cincinnatibirds.com/wildones/programs.htm#Conference. We will have programs, speakers, vendors, hikes, and the opportunity to meet Wild Ones members from all over the U.S.

4th Quarter 2007 National Board Meeting will be hosted by Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter on **September 28th at the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District Headquarters**. Following the meeting, we will tour Nygren Wetland.



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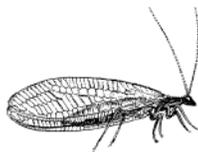
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including "Stop Exotics - Clean Your
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Living Shore, Best Management Prac-
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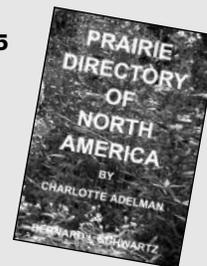
Clayton and Michele Oslund, Arrow-
head (MN) Chapter, contributed two
books to the library: *Hawaiian Gardens
Are to Go To*, and *What's Doin' the
Bloomin'?* Revised Edition (A pictorial
Guide to Wildflowers of the Upper Great
Lakes Regions Eastern Canada and North-
eastern USA), text and photography by
Clayton and Michele Oslund.

Kathy Coleman, Gibson Woods (IN)
Chapter, sent several articles about
natural areas in her part of the country.
Also, the **Sigurd Olson Environmental
Institute** at Northland College in Ash-
land, Wisconsin, sent us a copy of their
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Wild Ones Membership Form

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Annual Dues: Wild Wilder Wildest
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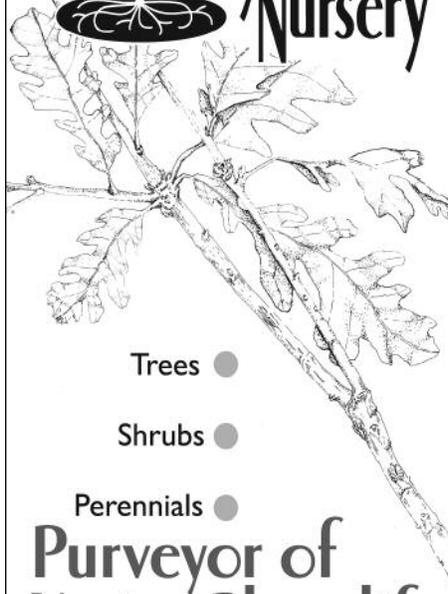
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If you are moving, either temporarily or permanently, please let the National Office know as soon as your new address is official. Returned and forwarded mail costs Wild Ones anywhere from \$.76 to \$2.75 per piece. You can mail your address information to Wild Ones, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912, call toll-free at 877-394-9453, or go to the Wild Ones members-only pages at www.for-wild.org. Click on item 2 (Update Personal Membership Info) and enter the appropriate changes.

Thank You!

We couldn't do it without your help.

Seeds for Education

Jim and Karen Timble and **Kay Blair** of Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter.

Matching Donations

From **HSBC** a 1:1 match on behalf of **Margo Hickman and Joseph Gilmartin**.

Lake-To-Prairie (IL) Chapter for benefit of the Wild Ones General Operating Fund.

From **Illinois Tool Works Foundation**, a 3:1 match on behalf of **Walter and Beverly Wieckert** of **Fox Valley Area Chapter (WI) Chapter** for the Wild Ones EcoCenter.

General Operating Fund

Thomas J. and Muriel Harabes, Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter.

Kathleen (Kadi) Renowden, Madison (WI) Chapter.

The Amazon rebates for the past two months were \$236.47. Thank you all for shopping Amazon.Com through our **Wild Ones Amazon Associate Bookstore** (www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore/).

Other

Thank you to business member **Marshland Transplant Aquatic Nursery**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, for the donation of black-eyed Susan seed used for a special raffle prize contributed by Wild Ones National to a local fundraising event.

HQ & EcoCenter Fund

Because we've had a really good response to our capital campaign, it is not possible to list all the names in this small space. We have received numerous donations from \$20,000 to \$5, and we appreciate them all so very much. Thank you, and we hope we can say the same thing again next issue. So please continue to send in your donations toward the development of the EcoCenter. We'll recognize you formally at a future date. Collections to-date from non-chapter contributors total \$146,141.

Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter \$20,000 1:2 Challenge:

Calhoun County (MI) Chapter	\$ 250
Central Wisconsin (WI) Chapter	\$ 500
Door County (WI) Chapter	\$ 200
Gibson Woods (IN) Chapter	\$ 100
North Park Nature Center (IL) Chapter	\$ 250
Oakland (MI) Chapter	\$2000
Otter Tail (MN) Chapter	\$ 200
St. Louis (MO) Chapter	\$ 888
Western Reserve (OH) Chapter	\$ 200
Total	\$4588
Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter Match	\$2294
Grant total to date	\$6882

Thank you to the boards and the rest of the members of these Wild Ones chapters. Both Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter and National Wild Ones appreciate your spirit.