

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



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Thank you. Back cover.



A MYSTERY EXPLORED

By Maryann Whitman

It's All One Piece

Landscaping practices as promoted by Wild Ones have far-reaching implications, with beneficial effects on biodiversity and atmospheric carbon dioxide. ¶ Identification with Wild Ones suggests more than our mutual attraction to growing native plants. Even non-gardeners may be attracted to the ecologically sound idea of native plants. Whether we live in a high rise, on a city lot, or on acreage, we recognize the complex, dynamic interactions among plants, animals, and the ecosystems they inhabit. Whether we are attracted to raspberries, ferns, insects, birds, or orchids, we recognize the natural environment as all one piece. When the dynamically stable connections among the components – however defined – are broken, there is a danger that the entire system will deteriorate and break down. We humans are a species contained within and reliant on that delicate system. ¶ With last issue's presentation of Douglas Tallamy's book, *Bringing Nature Home*, the *Wild Ones Journal* has embarked on a series of articles that will shed a bright light on the impact of our landscaping choices. It's quite clear that we don't claim enough credit.

Have you ever wondered why, specifically, we can say that native plants do not need to be fertilized or, for that matter, have any chemicals thrown at them? Is it something inherent in the plants? Is it something that we, the native planting caretakers, do, or don't do? Is it something about the medium they grow in? All are good possibilities.

Is it something inherent in the plants?

One of the first qualities that we mention about native plants is their roots – they are extensive, and some are capable of growing very deep into the soil. We have drawings that we show to skeptics, comparing the roots of a handful of common natives with the roots of Kentucky bluegrass, the typical lawn grass. The native plant roots are dense and fibrous, and they have an average depth of 8 to 10 feet (to the best of our knowledge). For the most part, natives are perennials; once they are established, their lives span decades. In the wild, native plants tend to grow in communities that share space – above and below ground, nutrients, water, and sunlight over the time of a growing season.

Roots that are extensive, that grow to great depths, and have longevity, introduce life-supporting functions to areas of the soil that do not usually entertain such activity. The growing roots exude sugar solutions and release gases that are the byproducts of their life processes. They are constantly sloughing off cells and dying off, thereby introducing humus and organic molecules to great depths in the soil. They are breaking into hard soil with the slow, persistent pressure of their growth. When they die, the spaces their bodies occupied form ducts for life-supporting water and gas exchange, and micro-tunnels for small organisms.

A vast proportion of other plants grown on this continent are annuals (agricultural/food crops, landscaping bedding plants), which are not genetically predisposed to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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



Growing our influence by fostering alliances



One of the many exciting things happening these days is a growing partnership between Wild Ones and the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Habitat Gardening Program. Through conference calls arranged by Toni Stahl, who is a member of the Columbus (OH) Chapter and is also the NWF Ambassador of the Year, we learned that NWF

appreciates and makes use of the educational opportunities that Wild Ones offers. We've agreed that NWF will start sending invitations to join Wild Ones at a first-year special rate to thousands of NWF habitat volunteers. Through their outreach, these volunteers are in a great position to pass along information about Wild Ones to an even broader circle of potentially interested people.

Wild Ones, in turn, will assist NWF by expanding our model city ordinances regarding weeds, native plants, and sustainable landscaping to help their staff prepare to launch a new national "Flyway Cities" initiative. This new program will encourage four large cities each year to improve habitat for migrating birds. Updating city ordinances to promote use of native plants will be one aspect of this program. The selected target cities for 2008 are Atlanta, Georgia; Austin, Texas; Seattle, Washington; and San Diego, California. In addition, when we launch our Wild Ones Ecospace yard certification program, we will work toward creating a reciprocal program with the existing NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat program.

Next time you attend a non-Wild Ones meeting or a conference that may attract people interested in sustainable landscaping,

bring along some Wild Ones brochures, or mention upcoming local Wild Ones programs. In addition to our standard introductory brochure "In Harmony with Nature: Landscaping with Native Plants," or our membership brochure, there are a number of others, such as the one-page essay, "Why Wild Ones," by Portia Brown from the Louisville Metro (KY) Chapter, or our new "Rain Gardens" brochure. You can download them from our web site at www.for-wild.org/download/ or call the National Office.

Try to make a connection between Wild Ones and other groups to which you belong. No one minds being asked, "Is there anything Wild Ones can do to help you? Would you like to work together on a project or perhaps host a program together?"

Speaking of appreciating help, as you are likely aware, the price of oil and the demand for food grains for non-food purposes has caused a substantial increase in many costs. This has included an increase in printing and distribution costs related to the *Wild Ones Journal*. However, because so many Wild Ones members have continued to renew and join at the higher Wilder and Wildest levels, I am pleased to say that we won't have to increase membership rates to offset these increased costs. Thank you to everyone who continues to support Wild Ones and our mission. I also want to note that, as directed by the National Board, membership dues do not directly support the Wild Ones' new headquarters building in Appleton, Wisconsin. Rather, funds for this facility are maintained as a separate account. *

Carol Andrews, 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
execdirector@for-wild.org

President

Carol Andrews • 218-730-9954
president@for-wild.org

Past President

Joe Powelka • 608-837-6308
vicepresident@for-wild.org

Secretary

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

Treasurer

Marty Rice • 952-927-6531
treasurer@for-wild.org

Communications Committee Chair

Bret Rappaport
comco@for-wild.org

Seeds for Education Director

Steve Maassen • 920-233-5914
sfedirector@for-wild.org

Web Site Coordinator

Peter Chen • webmanager@for-wild.org

LIBRARIAN

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

MEETING COORDINATOR

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

BOARD MEMBERS

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WILD ONES JOURNAL EDITOR

Maryann Whitman • 248-652-4004
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

Richard Ehrenberg, of the Madison (WI) Chapter, is a landscape architect.

Janet Allen is President of the Habitat Gardening of Central New York (NY) Chapter.

Barbara Bray is President of the Oakland (MI) Chapter.

Tim Lewis is a National Board member and a member of the Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter.

Laurie Yahr is Co-President of the Madison (WI) Chapter of Wild Ones.

Toni Stahl and **Marc Apfelstadt** are members of the Columbus (OH) Chapter.

Rollie Henkes is a Partner at Large in Iowa, and editor of *Midwest Woodlands and Prairies*.

Steve Maassen is a Seeds for Education Director and member of the Fox Valley (WI) Area Chapter.

Lucy Schumann, Milwaukee-North (WI) Chapter, produced the drawings on pages 1 and 14.

The Wild Ones Journal is looking for writers and artists. If you're interested, please contact Maryann Whitman, Journal Editor, journal@for-wild.org.

ECOSPACE

Want to get more native plants into your yard? Want to really get into natural landscaping?

Unlike other yard certification programs, the Wild Ones EcoSpace Certification Program looks at the big picture, to get you, your family, your friends, and your neighbors thinking about making environmentally sound changes in your yards.

EcoSpace is a great way to let the world see what you are doing for biodiversity, to offset climate change, and a lot more.

Watch the next issue of the *Journal* for news about this exciting new program.



WILD ONES ANNUAL MEETING



Mark your calendars for August 22-24, 2008, for the Wild Ones Annual Meeting and first glimpse of the Wild Ones EcoCenter.

The Wild Ones Annual Meeting/Conference will be held in conjunction with the opening of the Wild Ones EcoCenter this August 22-24, 2008, in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Speakers include: **Anne Rosenberg** who is a local raptor rehabilitator; **Anita Carpenter**, showing us "Birds, Bugs & Butterflies"; Kettle Moraine Landscaping owner, **Connie Ramthun**, speaking on "Favorite Prairie Forbs & Grasses;" **Professor Dave Kopitzke**, carrying us away with "Fun Facts about Woodland Plants"; and **Professor Greg Summers**, telling us about "Environmentalism in the Fox River Valley and the rest of the USA." Rounding out the event will be Prairie Nursery owner, **Neil Diboll**, telling us about "What's on the Horizon."

And don't forget the photo contest, silent auction, leadership workshops, vendors & exhibitors, banquet, and tours – including the Wild Ones EcoCenter.



Watch for the registration form in the July/August issue of the *Wild Ones Journal*, and "What's New" on the Wild Ones web site.

Looking for a new name. We're looking for a name for our new EcoCenter / National Headquarters. Got any ideas? Remember that the site includes a building (currently residential in appearance), roughly 3/4 of an acre of open land to be developed into demonstration gardens, and 3 acres of riparian hardwood and floodplain forest. **Please submit your suggestions to execdirector@for-wild.org by May 16th.**

A landscaping design. We also want ideas for the demonstration gardens which will surround the new National Headquarters. Landscape architect Curt Solberg, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, and Ecologist James Havel, Green Bay (WI) Chapter, have given us a basic sketch and a restoration plan (www.for-wild.org/eco/center/), and we've invited several landscape designers to submit ideas, but we would like you to spread the word as well. If you have ideas about how the demonstration gardens should look, please don't hesitate to show us. You can create a design for one or all the gardens. Just make sure to get your ideas to us by May 16th either via surface mail or e-mail at execdirector@for-wild.org.

Both of these challenges come with the reward of not only knowing you've contributed to the overall concept of the Wild Ones EcoCenter and its mission, but also recognition of your efforts prominently displayed at the EcoCenter.

Green Gables

An american landscape designed with nature in mind

By Richard J. Ehrenberg

An Introduction

Fourteen years and 56 seasons have passed since the fall of 1993, when I first set foot on my yard at Green Gables. This is the name I gave to a newly purchased lakeside property within the university town of Whitewater, Wisconsin. While the lawn-covered property and the pink shingles on the roof did nothing to remind one of the beautiful country-scape in the movie, "Anne of Green Gables," I knew that it would in the future.

The roof was easily reshingled with green, and the blue Cape Cod-style house was easily repainted, not white, but a light clay color. Any transformation of the landscape would take years; but as anyone who has passed middle age knows, the years go by quickly.

Each of the seasons at Green Gables has been filled with anticipation and learning; and, as my 150-page photo-history album attests, each new year it looked somewhat different from the preceding year. Landscaping over the 14 years has been a journey of new experiences, not a one-time completed project.

The journey of natural/native landscaping is strikingly different from the traditional, neat, orderly landscape designs which feature lawns and foundation plantings. Such static landscaping doesn't change much. Heaven forbid that a blue violet should ever appear in a green lawn. Volunteer trees are not allowed. Foundation shrub plantings are usually not given enough space to grow and are "shaped" yearly to assure a certain form and size.

The simple, picture-perfect traditional landscape design may be attractive, but once that scene has been experienced, there is nothing to look forward to. The journey of growing a natural/native landscape, on the other hand, provides a lifetime of interest and changing experiences. There are changes with the seasons. The landscape is permitted to mature, and seems to reinvent itself over the years. A natural landscape fulfills its destiny over time in its renewable journey. A traditional landscape design can fulfill its meager destiny the day of installation.

Green Gables is an example of how anyone with even a small yard (mine is 8/10 of an acre) can bring back the pleasurable experience of a non-industrial, non-urban, American landscape – the kind that attracts tourists and vacationers trying to get away from urbanism, and trying to get in touch with nature. There is a name for such properties: "My cabin up north" or "my vacation home." Green Gables is my year-round vacation home.

I feel no need for a second piece of land, which has been disturbed in order that I might build a second home, to which I must travel, while burning gasoline. All of this is good for our environ-

ment. At all levels, native/natural landscaping is "Green landscaping." Our country needs more of this.

Creating a natural landscape can be accomplished quickly with a contractor, or it can happen over a period of years. The work can be part of a way of life, an enjoyable experience for those who like gardening. It can be a time of creating memories of times spent together on a family endeavor.

In future articles I plan to explain and show pictures of the various aspects involved in creating the landscape at Green Gables in Whitewater. I hope the journey will encourage people to plan for landscapes with nature in mind. and to help promote the movement to bring back a truly American landscape experience to our yards, cities, towns. and countryside.

My credentials for writing about this topic are primarily 29 years of professional experience in the field of landscape architecture. Childhood prefaced this with the experience of growing up in rural Minnesota, and learning to appreciate natural beauty. While studying for a degree in landscape architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I was fortunate to have Darrel Morrison, a long-time Wild Ones honorary board member and well-known proponent of natural landscape design, open up this concept of landscaping for me.

Over the years I have been a planner at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, have been involved with the natural areas at Old World Wisconsin, along with designing landscapes for residential properties. I am, of course, still learning. *



Here is a sneak preview of the back yard several years into this project. Frankly, there was little to see at the outset. A view of the lake may be seen between trees in the upper-right corner.



The view in the back yard now changes with the seasons. This is late summer with Echinacea blooming in the foreground.

Porcelainberry

By Janet Allen

Looking for a big impact in your garden? Want to shade an undesirable view, or create a shady sitting area under a pergola? Cover a fence? How about a plant for a small garden where vertical gardening is necessary? Need a plant for erosion control? A fast-growing vine with beautiful red stems and bright blue berries that persist into winter would be just the thing. What's more, it tolerates adverse conditions and is pest-free. All this, and it attracts birds, too.

These descriptions from current online catalogs may sound like just the plant you need in your yard. But before you send in your order, read on.

With no natural enemies to keep it in check, this plant sprawls kudzu-like over native vegetation, especially in urban and suburban areas where the soil is disturbed. It can cover trees, shutting out light and weakening them so much they collapse under the weight. Birds and mammals do indeed eat the berries – distributing them far beyond your yard.

These glowing, and not-so-glowing, descriptions are of the same vine: The woody, deciduous invader called porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*).

Some nurseries selling the plant acknowledge its aggressive nature, even while extolling its beauty. Online gardening forums mention its invasive tendencies in one posting, but in the next, declare they won't remove it because they don't see it causing any harm. Ironically, these people want to provide berries for birds, not realizing they're ultimately depriving them of the native trees and shrubs that best meet the birds' needs. It's hard to blame gardeners, though. Some universities include this plant in their online plant databases with a short note about its invasive tendencies, but otherwise treating it as they would any other ornamental.

History and current status

Porcelainberry was originally imported from China, Korea, Japan, and Russia as a bedding, shading, and landscape plant in the 1870s. Porcelainberry now occurs from New England to North Carolina, and west to Michigan. Massachusetts has officially banned this plant; Connecticut recently initiated a trial period of voluntary compliance with a similar ban.

Look-alikes

It's easy to mistake native grape vines for porcelainberry. It's important to learn how to distinguish between them, though, since native grapes belong to local ecosystems and are important to wildlife. The porcelainberries are noticeably different from grapes, but if they aren't fruiting, check the pith: The cut stems of porcelainberries are white, and those of grapes are brown. Also, porcelainberry bark is smoother than the shreddy bark of mature grape vines.

Management

If you try to dig out or cut down a large vine, it can re-sprout from its taproot. Some recommend mowing it to the ground three or four times a season. It's one of those plants that may require herbicides. (Investigate this further before taking this action.) Seed may be viable in the soil for years, so plan to follow up for several seasons to fully eradicate this plant. In the meantime, don't let it flower or let the fruits develop.

If porcelainberry is already smothering your trees, you can help by removing as much as you can. Don't risk a limb crashing down



Don't mistake Porcelainberry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*) for wild grapes. Photo by James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service. Courtesy of Forestry Images.

on your head by yanking vines from the canopy, though. Cut them as low to the ground as possible and as high as possible to kill the vine while creating a window of light for the tree.

Native alternatives

Looking for plants with a big impact? Choose a native vine. Virgin's bower (*Clematis virginiana*), and trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) are beautiful alternatives. If you have space, trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*) is another good choice.

For more information, visit Plant Invaders of Mid-Atlantic Areas at www.invasive.org/eastern/midatlantic/ambr.html, or purchase a copy of *Invasive Plants of Upper Midwest* at the Wild Ones Bookstore, www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore/. *

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Orange Dogs, Wafers, and Things

By Barbara Bray

Photo by Lacy L. Hyche, Auburn University, Bugwood.org.



This orange dog caterpillar looks like bird droppings, and has "stink-horns" on its head.

I have a riddle for you. What smells like a bobcat, is polygamous, and attracts "orange dogs" that look like big fat bird droppings? Give up? *Ptelea trifoliata* is the name, and citrus is the game. The most common name for this tree is hoptree, but I came to know it as the wafer ash. We had been camping at Warren Dunes State Park, along Lake Michigan. My children wanted to climb the huge dune next to the campground, and I grudgingly accompanied them up the almost vertical face of this monstrous pile of slipping sand. At the top, I decided to follow some of the narrow footpaths leading away from the climbing hill. That's when I noticed the tree. The shiny, dark green leaflets of three attracted my attention.

They felt smooth and slightly thick to my touch. Interesting clusters of flat brown seeds, almost an inch in diameter, dangled from the tips of the branches. This small tree somehow seemed special, and it was. It is one of the northernmost representatives of the *Rutaceae* family in North America – the same family that includes all our citrus fruit trees.

Wafer ash trees not only grow in Lake Michigan sand dunes, but also in rocky, gravelly places from here to Florida and Texas. Scratching the bark or crushing some leaves releases a pungent citrus odor that some describe as unpleasant or musky. Early settlers in America viewed a plant with such strong odor and bitter taste as one likely to treat diseases like ague (malaria). Other common names for this tree, ague bark or quinine tree, reflect those early medicinal experiments. Another small tree also caught their attention. The prickly ash, (*Zanthoxylum americanum*), grows in woods and along river banks. It has five to 11 leaflets, and pairs of thorns along its branches. Pioneers discovered that chewing a small fruit of this tree relieved toothaches, hence its name – toothache tree. The fruits and foliage of prickly ash both have a pleasant lemony odor because, like the wafer ash, this tree is also part of the *Rutaceae* family. Now, I cannot peel an orange or squeeze a lemon without thinking about wafer ash and prickly ash trees.

As spring and summer return to the Midwest, our two special trees begin to bloom – first prickly ash in April and May, and then the wafer ash in June. Both trees blossom with clusters of inconspicuous greenish flowers. Prickly ash flowers have four to five petals, while wafer ash has flowers with three to five petals. Prickly ash trees are dioecious, which means the tree has either male or female flowers, but not both. Wafer ash, however, is unpredictable. You might find a tree that is only male, only female, or has characteristics of both. That's called "polygamous." No matter what the flowers are like, though, they are abuzz with flies, honeybees, gnats, and many other insects.

Imagine now a large yellow and black butterfly, with almost a 6-inch wingspan, drifting lazily through the forest looking for a place to alight. The butterfly, a giant swallowtail, lands on the leaf of a prickly ash, and lays an egg. The caterpillar that emerges from the egg feeds hungrily on the leaves absorbing the natural toxins from the plant. Suddenly a bird flies overhead, but it overlooks the caterpillar because giant swallowtail larvae look just like big fat bird droppings. If a predator investigates, however, the larvae rears up and projects two bright orange horns into the air. These scent horns, or *osmateria*, emit a foul-smelling lemon-like odor to discourage further curiosity. When the caterpillar is not feeding, it can pull its head back toward its body, looking like the head of a dog. Because giant swallowtails lay eggs on plants in the citrus family, and the larvae resemble dogs, some people call these caterpillars "orange dogs."

And now you understand the answer to my riddle. *

Wild Ones Photo Contest 2008



Set your shutter speeds. Flip your f stops. And get focused in on the 2008 Wild Ones Photo Contest.

It's coming up soon – don't wait until it's too late. Natural landscapes, Wild Ones people, interesting native plants – whatever catches your eye – your photos could be winners. Enter your best photos, and you might just see them displayed at the new Wild Ones headquarters in Appleton, Wisconsin. There are the six usual categories plus the children's category, and all Wild Ones members can submit up to four entries. Mail-in **deadline is August 18, 2008**. See guidelines for more options and full details: www.for-wild.org/conference/2008/photo/ or call the National Office at 877-394-9453.

Wild Ones Ecoscaper

Get credit for your knowledge, your skills, your experience, and all your hard work.

Somewhere between a prairie and a formal planting lies the fertile potential of native plants in an ornamental design, the domain of the Ecoscaper – which is a brilliant synthesis in language of the two concepts, landscaper and ecologist. With this in mind, Wild Ones has developed the Ecoscaper Certification Program. Enhance your knowledge, and get credit for your accomplishments. Three educational levels plus continuing education criteria. Visit www.wildcertification.org/ecoscaper/ for more information or to enroll.



On Reading Bringing Nature Home

By Tim Lewis



Most of my life, I was “programmed” to think bugs are bad because they eat your plants and gardens. I was reminded of this recently while talking to my mom about what was going to become of the burned trees around her Montana home after the forest fires. I said that they should not all be cut down and removed because the dead trees would help regenerate the forest and give shelter to wildlife. Her response was, “But they will get bugs.” And that says it all. If you have bugs, something is wrong. Get rid of them.

I know that my native plants bring in “bugs,” but I did not give much thought to that, other than that some were beneficial species.

Then I read “the book.” After the first three chapters, I was convinced. The rest of the book was merely support material.

One of the things that *Wild Ones* tells beginners is that if they plant a diversity of native plants in their yard, they will discover that a diversity of “wildlife” will show up. Now Dr. Tallamy has filled the missing link – he has substantiated with research what we had understood intuitively: The insect population will increase when you have a diversity of native plants; and when you have more insects, you will have more birds. The diversity of insects and animals enlarges the ecosystem that is based on a diversity of native plants. This is the essence of what *Wild Ones* advocates.

We plant natives. Insects and animals appear. It follows that we should learn about all the things that promote healthy ecosystems. That means we should learn about what the insects and animals need, just as we learn what the plants need.

Dr. Tallamy has filled the missing link – he has substantiated with research what we had understood intuitively: The insect population will increase when you have a diversity of native plants; and when you have more insects, you will have more birds. The diversity of insects and animals enlarges the ecosystem that is based on a diversity of native plants. This is the essence of what *Wild Ones* advocates.

Our native plants evolved to fill ecological niches over thousands of years. As the plants evolved, so did the insects. Insects became dependent on specific plants for food, and plants became dependent on specific insects to pollinate them. Insects form the lowest trophic level of grazers of plants. The majority of native insects will not eat non-native plants because they are not able to digest the chemicals in them. Insects contain more protein than beef, and they provide valuable energy for their predators. Insects are an important element in the food chain.

According to the *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, 96 percent of North American birds rely on insects to feed their young. For those who fear that insects are going to destroy all their plants, of the over 9 million or so insect species, only 1 percent have a negative impact on humans. The other 99 percent are beneficial to human needs. Without insects, we would not survive.

So, should we learn about insects? Of course. We all started out with little knowledge of native plants. First we learned about which ones could be planted in our landscapes. Then we learned more about having a diversity of plants for color and textures throughout the year. We learned about plant communities. We learned that the diversity of native plants brings in a diversity of wildlife.

As we continue to learn about natural landscaping, we owe it to ourselves, and for the health of our Earth, to learn about anything that is related to the plants. Planting natives, providing food for insects and birds will help reduce the negative effects we have perpetrated in the past on our yards and ecosystems. Individually, we *can* make a difference. As Dr. Tallamy wrote, “As gardeners and stewards of our land, we have never been so empowered – and the ecological stakes have never been so high.”

As I have come to see it, being a natural landscaper is not just about the plants. Most of us know all the benefits of native plants as plants. But natural landscaping goes far beyond the plant. It has to include the insects, birds, and animals that are supported by, and support the plants.

The more we know about the other species, the more we will appreciate the importance of natives, and the more effective we will be as stewards. *

Wildflowers of Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest A Comprehensive Field Guide For Amateurs and Professionals Book review by Laurie Yahr

There is an incredible new comprehensive book to assist in identification of wild flowers of the upper Midwest. It is compiled by Merel R. Black, the web master for the Plants of Wisconsin the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point web site and Dr.

Emmet J. Judziewicz, Associate Professor and Curator of the Vascular Plants at the Robert W. Freckmann Herbarium (also at Stevens Point).

It's as if you were carrying around their web site in your hand. In this 271-page book, they have managed to pack more than 2,100 plant photographs, 300 drawings, and 1,085 county distribution maps. So naturally, some of the images are quite small, but they have been successful in focusing in on pertinent elements. Following the format of the web site, each plant includes common and scientific names with origins of the scientific name, status (whether it is native or introduced, threatened, endangered, or of special concern) – and for natives, the number for the WDNR coefficient of conservatism.

Each plant has a general description, followed by descriptions of the flower (sometimes fruit) leaf, and habitat. The arrangement of the book is a sort of key, beginning with flowers with three or six parts, followed by those with four (or two) parts, five united parts, five separate parts, seven or more parts (asters fall in this spot), and last: tiny parts.

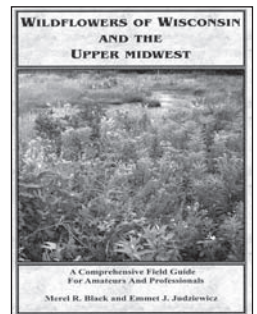
A few plants with special characteristics, such as floating aquatics and vines and some with milky juice, are also included. In each section plants are shown in family groups. Larger families begin with a description followed by a simplified key with thumbnail photos. For instance at Heath: Ericaceae, 10 genera are listed with the number of Wisconsin-occurring species in parentheses, with 12 thumbnails; key identifiers are in bold type. More detailed descriptions and large photos cover four pages.

My rating of any identification book always begins with the number of native orchid species covered and this book has 47.

Wildflowers of Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest is published by Cornerstone Press, a unique publishing “company” run by students in an upper level “editing and publishing” course taught at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. The proceeds from the sale of the books go into a university fund, and will be used by next year's class to fund their Cornerstone Press publication.

To review a few pages from the book, check out this web site: www.uwsp.edu/english/cornerstone/.

Price is \$39 per copy, signed by one of the authors, and post-paid through the Wild Ones Bookstore: www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore.



Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Human Biomes, Homo Fossils, Bugged Bees, and Caterpillar Memories

Welcome to the Anthropocene

The classic presentation of the biomes of the Earth, as seen in all our current ecology texts, has been based on abiotic environmental conditions, like climate, and the productivity of the dominant vegetation. The eight major biomes have been: Tropical Rainforest, Tropical Savanna, Desert, Chaparral, Grassland, Temperate Deciduous Forest, Temperate Boreal Forest, and Arctic and Alpine Tundra.

In the December 13, 2007, issue of *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, the peer-reviewed publication of the Ecological Society of America, a new way of looking at our planet was presented. Global data from satellites and land management statistics were used to map a new system of "anthropogenic biomes," "anthromes," or "human biomes" that describe the biosphere as it exists today, the result of human reshaping of ecosystems.

Anthropogenic biomes are not simple vegetation or climatic categories, and are best characterized as heterogeneous landscape mosaics combining a variety of different land uses and land covers. The major anthropogenic biomes suggested are: Dense Settlements, built environments, very high populations; Villages, agricultural settlements (>100 persons km²); Croplands, Crops Mixed With Other Uses, Rangelands, grazing, minimal crops & forests; Forested, forests with humans & agriculture; Wildlands, without humans or agriculture.

This publication may well spur a paradigm shift in approaches to conservation, restoration of "natural areas" and concerns for biodiversity. The Wild Ones' approach to natural landscaping will surely find a comfortable niche. (See the article in *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, available at www.ecotope.org/people/ellis/papers/ellis_2008.pdf.)

Population

Consider this: Last year a human-like fossil was found in the mountains of northern Spain that is thought to represent the last common ancestor of Neanderthals and modern man. The new fossil, tentatively classified as *Homo antecessor* (Pioneer Man), was determined to be 1.3 million years old. By the year 500 BCE, the population of genus *Homo* was estimated to be 100 million. Around 1835 there were 1 billion of us. In 1960 there were 3 billion. And in January, 2008, the population of the planet was estimated at 6.778 billion.

Bugging bees

Scientists at Queen Mary, University of London, are bugging bees – with minuscule tracking gear to better understand these brainy bugs.

Biologist Nigel Raine said, "Bumblebees have a relatively small brain – they have about 950,000 brain cells, humans have 100 billion – but they can achieve rather impressive feats of learning and memory given what they have got."

Recent research has revealed that bees are able to recognize individual human faces, which, according to Dr. Raine, is not that surprising given the daily challenges they face while foraging.

He explained, "When you think about your average park or meadow, there might be dozens of species of flowers which are all different in terms of color and shape and scent, and they are all differing in the rewards they are providing.

"Ultimately, the bees' job is to go and find the best rewards from these flowers, and they have to be flexible and learn and remember information, all the while making and breaking associations. This is all really quite complicated."

Their navigational skills are impressive, too. "These tiny animals leave their nests, fly back and forth between flowers, then they are somehow able to add all of these vectors together and fly back to their nest in a straight line," said Dr. Raine.

In the wild, bees will often visit flowers in a sequence that they repeat time and time again.

"This makes sense biologically," explained Dr. Raine. "If you take the nectar out of the flowers, they will begin to refill, so you do not want to visit that flower again until it is as full up as possible."

But what is really clever, he adds, is that the bees will work out shortcuts so that they can create the shortest, most efficient journey possible.

"We are really interested to see how they form these routes – we call them "traplines" – and we are using technology to help us to understand how the bees are performing these feats of spatial learning."

Bees around Europe have suffered a huge drop in numbers in recent years: three species in the UK have recently become extinct; another eight are in serious decline.

Scientists believe that habitat degradation around their nesting and foraging sites could be to blame.

Dr. Raine said, "In terms of biodiversity, bumblebees are hugely important pollinators, yet most species are becoming increasingly rare.

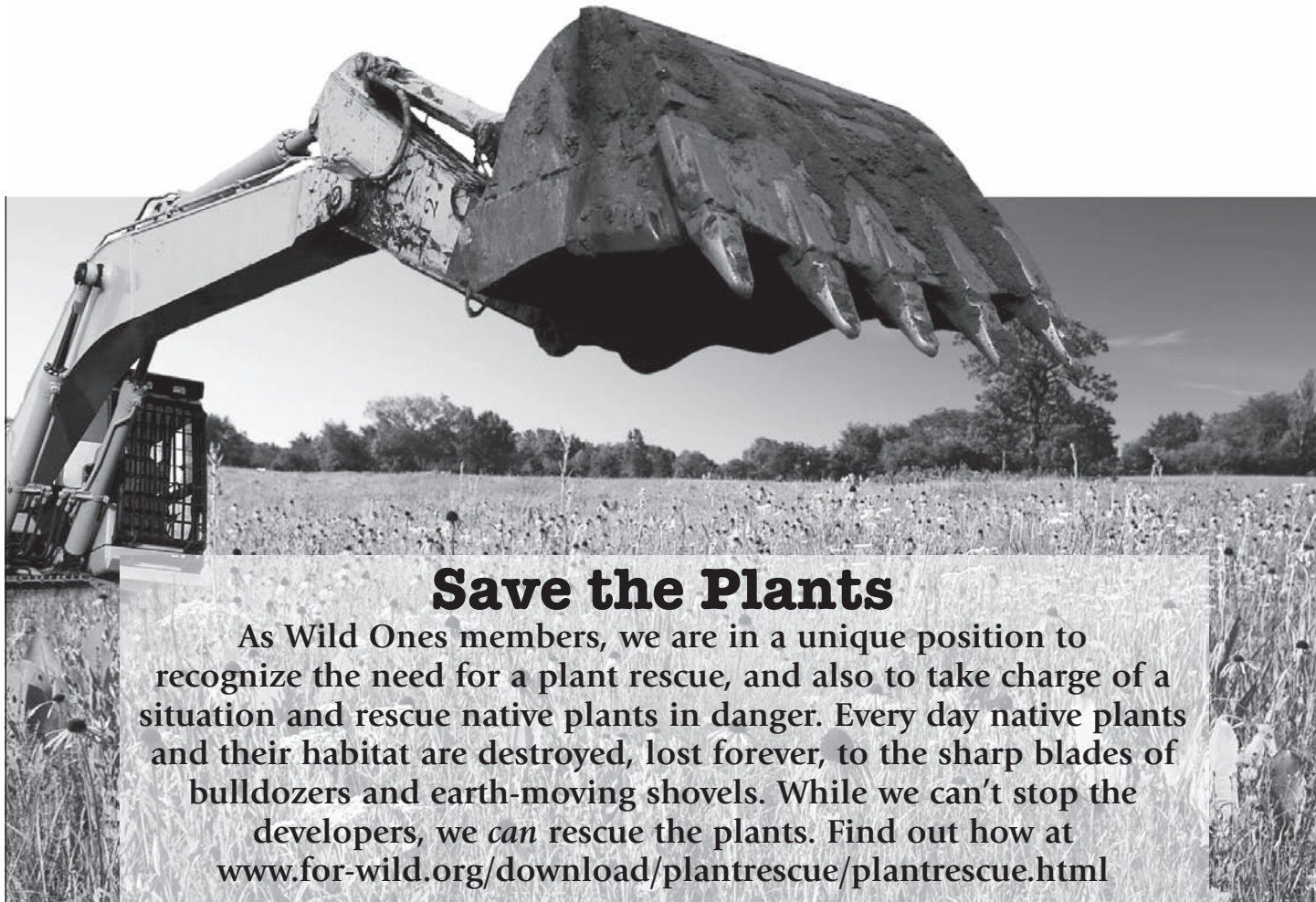
"Understanding the differences in how they actually forage is very important for aiding conservation."

It's a weird and wonderful world

Scientists at Georgetown University have demonstrated that learning and memory in butterfly caterpillars is not only possible, but that these memories are retained by the butterfly after metamorphosis. Metamorphosis is that poorly understood period of life when a caterpillar enters into a pupa or chrysalis phase and emerges a winged butterfly. What happens in the chrysalis is even more mysterious than what happens to Superman in the phone booth. That memories survive this "molecular soup" stage is just as stunning.

Conservation applications of this discovery easily progress into the arena of science fiction. *





Save the Plants

As Wild Ones members, we are in a unique position to recognize the need for a plant rescue, and also to take charge of a situation and rescue native plants in danger. Every day native plants and their habitat are destroyed, lost forever, to the sharp blades of bulldozers and earth-moving shovels. While we can't stop the developers, we *can* rescue the plants. Find out how at www.for-wild.org/download/plantrescue/plantrescue.html



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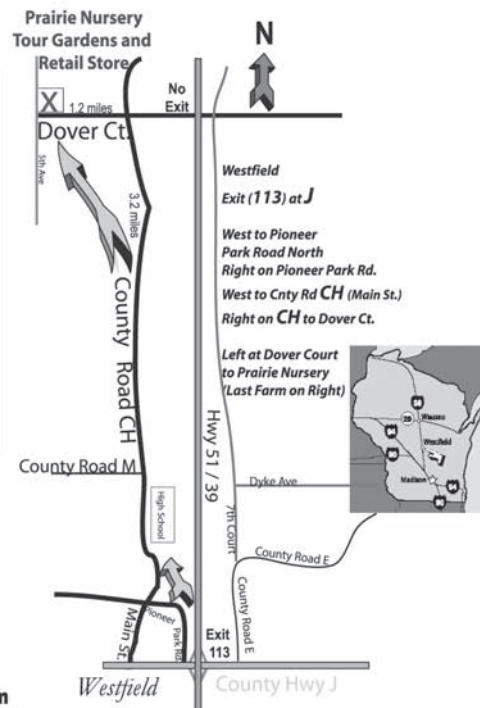
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A • B A C K • Y A R D • H A B I T A T

Adapted by Toni Stahl from an article originally written by Rollie Henkes,
which appeared in the Winter, 2008, issue of *Midwest Woodlands & Prairies*



Toni and Marc's front yard during its traditional phase in 2001, before the introduction of any native plants. Photo by Marc Apfelstadt.



The same front yard in 2006, having found its true identity as a wildlife habitat. Photo by Marc Apfelstadt.

"I'll believe it when I see it," thought Toni Stahl, eight years ago after watching a VHS on the first National Wildlife Federation (NWF) certified yard, explaining how the gardener attracted birds to his yard.

Today, Toni and her husband, Marc Apfelstadt, believe it, and they're sharing their story with others as they describe the dramatic transformation of their 50 x 100-foot lot in Dublin, Ohio. "We were not gardeners when we started, so if we can do it, anyone can," says Marc.

Soon after Toni and Marc certified their yard as an "NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat," in 2003, they also passed online distance-learning courses to become the first Habitat Ambassadors in Ohio. NWF was, at the time, just getting into the impact of native and invasive plants on wildlife. The information available was at a national level, and difficult for non-gardeners like Marc and Toni to interpret. Their NWF manager suggested that they contact Wild Ones with questions. After joining the Columbus (OH) Chapter of Wild Ones, and attending several presentations sponsored by the chapter, they found they could provide more detailed information.

So Marc and Toni began standing in front of Home Depot, stopping people coming in to purchase a toilet seat, and asking, "Would you like more butterflies in your yard?" When they showed photos of their yard, adults were "oohing" like children watching fireworks.

With the help of before-and-after pictures, Toni and Marc tell audiences how a host of new birds began appearing in their yard two years after they tore out beds of annuals and much of the turf grass, and replaced them with native plants and shrubs. They had to thumb through guidebooks to identify the more than 30 butterfly species that began fluttering around their evolving habitat.

Toni started writing Ohio-specific how-to flyers, available on their web site. Different groups began requesting presentations, trainings, and visits to their yard. After three years, Marc and Toni became overwhelmed with requests. The National Wildlife Federation named them "Habitat Ambassador Hosts," and certified them to train others to be NWF Volunteers. A small, friendly, knowledgeable team now helps reach more people.

With a zeal that would put an evangelist to shame, they've been spreading the word to homeowners in Ohio and beyond ever since. Seeing the benefits of a few simple changes in their yard, it became Marc and Toni's joint mission in life to educate people, one yard at a time. They even admit to buttonholing people in supermarket checkout lines to extol the benefits of habitat. Marc's lush photographs of butterflies, bees, birds, and blooms accent their PowerPoint presentations, and adorn the couple's comprehensive web site.

"They're superstars. We wish we could clone them," says Melinda Hughes-Wert, manager of volunteer programs for the National Wildlife Federation, an organization that depends heavily on volunteers to carry out its objectives. In fact, in 2007, Marc and Toni were chosen to receive NWF's Volunteer of the Year award.

"Wildlife and native plants certainly capture the imagination," Marc says. "We're also people persons," he adds. "We've made many new friends in the area because we take time to point out interesting things in our yard as neighbors walk by."

Toni and Marc promote a concept (validated by many studies) that you don't need a large area to support wildlife as long as it's properly diversified. The National Wildlife Federation picked up on the studies in the literature, offering to certify back yards and other sites that provide food and cover for wildlife.

Toni and Marc's yard, which now includes more than 100 species of native plants, goes well beyond certification requirements. Toni was invited by professors at the Ohio State University to give a presentation regarding data gathered in their garden. It was well received by the academic community, generating requests for a different style of presentation (citizen scientist).

The most exciting was the 2007 National Wild Ones Conference, where they presented their findings in a colorful PowerPoint presentation called, "Does Your Yard Make a Difference?"

The well-attended session got a great response. Donna VanBuecken, Wild Ones Executive Director, and Carol Andrews, Wild Ones President, approached Toni with questions about the changes at NWF over the past years. NWF yard certification now



The back yard is still being planned and planted, but several native shrubs and trees of varying heights were planted early in the process. Toni and Marc refer to this as the "back yard forest edge." Photo by Marc Apfelstadt.



Here is the front yard under snow cover, and decorated with seed heads left over from summer. Photo by Marc Apfelstadt.

requires sustainable gardening. NWF has connected plants to climate change in "A Gardener's Guide to Global Warming," available on Marc and Toni's web site.

Donna and Carol were interested in learning more. Toni called her manager at NWF headquarters and established a conference call with Carol and the head of the Habitats Programs, Kimberly Winters. Wild Ones and NWF found they had more in common than they had realized. They felt they could co-promote the two organizations easily. Additional discussions have followed involving more people, and several joint projects are evolving from this interaction.

"I feel the two organizations' goals have become more similar over time. Wild Ones has chapter meetings, has model weed laws, and has in-depth plant information. NWF has been around a lot longer, has a lot of visibility, and has made great strides in outlining wildlife's critical need of native plants. I feel that together, they can provide better help to people getting started – like they did for us, and still do," says Toni.

Record Keeping

Marc says you don't need to go to extremes to enjoy more songbirds and butterflies in your yard. But he believes that one thing he and Toni do would add to anyone's enjoyment, and that's their record-keeping system. Every year they record wildlife species they sight, along with plant species present that year.

Toni began making entries in an Excel spreadsheet in 2001, the so-called "before" or baseline year. The spreadsheet listed existing plants such as the bush honeysuckle (an invasive), cotoneaster, petunias, and marigolds. She also listed wildlife species observed. It was a short list: English sparrow, cardinal, mourning dove, and robin for the birds; monarch and cabbage white butterflies; Virginia opossum and striped skunk.

The next year, the record shows they tore out the invasive honeysuckle and the non-native annuals, and added plants like purple coneflower, butterfly weed, evening primrose, and woodland sunflower – 10 native plant species all told. Bird species sighted went up to nine that year; butterfly species remained at three.

Dramatic changes were recorded in the third year. By now, native plant species totaled 59, including understory shrubs such as serviceberry, gray dogwood, and spicebush. They created a native forest edge, with plants selected for varied heights. Bird species shot up to 30, while butterfly species increased to 16.

In 2006 their yard had 113 native plant species. That year they recorded 37 bird species and 33 butterfly species, along with nine mammalian species. By now their yard had become a stopover for migrants such as Swainson's thrush, ovenbird, rose-breasted grosbeak, common nighthawk, hummingbirds, and dozens of monarch butterflies on their way to Mexico in the fall.

Toni summarized their observations in a scholarly "white paper" research report last year, which has attracted the attention of ecologists. Her findings show a very strong correlation between plant diversity and wildlife populations over time.

Powered by native plants

"Our records confirm that it's not the size of the area that's so important, but rather it's the mix and diversity of plant species," Toni says. "Our records also show the importance of native plants, maintained without chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Wildlife can't exist without native plants.

"I think if other home owners recorded similar observations, it would add tremendously to our understanding of how wildlife interacts with landscaping practices," Toni adds.

To that end, Toni and Marc have posted a record-keeping guide on their web site, based on their system. If many home owners used such a standardized system, it could generate a huge database with some very useful comparisons, Toni believes.

"Whatever your system," Marc says, "keeping written records, along with shooting photos and videos, will help you connect with the natural world in your yard and appreciate it more."

"It's been five years, and the more we learn, the more we know we don't know," adds Toni.

Toni Stahl and Marc Apfelstadt would be pleased to have you visit their web site: <http://home.columbus.rr.com/nwfbackyardohio>.

2008 Seeds for Education Grants Awarded

By Steve Maassen, Seeds for Education Director

Wild Ones members are part of the natural landscaping movement because they believe using native plants in our landscaping is one way in which we personally can help heal the Earth. Our children are the next generation of native landscapers. Helping to develop their personalities to embrace the same concerns we have about healing the Earth and restoring our environment through native landscaping will continue what we have begun.

Baba Dioum, a Senegalese defender of the environment, once wrote: *"In the end we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. And we will understand only what we are taught."* It is with these notions in mind that the Wild Ones Board of Directors created the Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Fund (SFE). Lorrie's life's work with students, young and old, has been to cultivate these feelings for the natural world, and to instill a desire to heal the Earth.

The SFE Fund, established in 1995, supports schools, nature centers, and other places of learning for projects involving students creating natural landscapes and outdoor classrooms using native plants. Through the generous donations of Wild Ones members, and income from the growing SFE Fund, we were able to provide these cash awards.

Applications for 2008 came from all the coasts in the United States, and many of the states in between, as did the 54 judges who rated them. Our thanks to the judges for doing a great job of reviewing the applications, and providing good ratings and meaningful comments, which makes the award process that much easier.

This was an outstanding year for the Wild Ones SFE Program. We had 59 applicants – *the most we've ever had*. Although each of the applicants was deserving of praise and support, we were able to fund only some of the projects. Grants were based on the actual amount of funds requested, the judges' ranking in comparison to all 2008 grant applications, and the available funds. Wild Ones is pleased to announce the 2008 Seeds for Education grant recipients. (Chapters named in this article are those located closest to the grant recipients.):

Pringle Nature Center/Hoy Audubon Society. Bristol, Wisconsin. \$500
Pringle Nature Center Prairie Restoration. The SFE Grant will be used to continue the establishment of a native prairie within Bristol Woods County Park. It will purchase native seed to establish a 1-acre tallgrass prairie. The established prairie will become an environmental resource for many groups. (*Root River Area Chapter*)

River Ridge Elementary School. Moore, South Carolina. \$500.
Dig Deep! Developing Strong Roots for Lifelong Learners. To achieve their goals to foster a love and understanding of the environment, the River Ridge Elementary School undertook an extensive landscape renovation in 2001, utilizing South Carolina indigenous plants, which tied into the third grade's study of South Carolina. Their present goal is to take the next step – growing their students into "environmental champions." (*Partners at Large*)

Daemen College. Amherst, New York. \$490. Daemen College Ecotrail. Daemen College students have designed, and are creating, an environmental education area for the campus community, and partnering with under-served public schools. Emphasizing sustainable practices, a rain garden with native plants will be showcased near the start of the trail. Additional native plantings will provide food for wildlife and pollinators. (*Niagara Frontier Wildlife Habitat Council Chapter*)

Dottywood Community Arts. Lewisburg, West Virginia. \$400.
Native Plant Outdoor Classroom at Community Arts Center. Dottywood Community Arts will involve broad-spectrum community participation to design and build a native plant outdoor classroom that will provide interactive place-based education. The outdoor classroom will have two components: Native plants and a labyrinth path. (*Partners at Large*)

Children's Association for Maximum Potential. Center Point, Texas. \$400. The Nature Center and Sensory Gardens. The Nature Center and Sensory Gardens will be expanding their program for children with special needs to include native and priority plant studies and habitat restoration in an outdoor classroom. (*Partners at Large*)

North Shore Community School. Duluth, Minnesota. \$300.
North Shore Community School Rain Garden Swale Planting. North Shore Community School focuses on an environmentally integrated curriculum, technology literacy, and community involvement through use of a 20-acre on-site school forest, stream, tree nursery, rain garden, and ephemeral pond. Their goal this year is to increase the effectiveness and

habitat of the garden by planting native plants along the swale into which it drains on its way to Schmidt Creek and Lake Superior, 3 miles away. (*Arrowhead Chapter*)

Children's Community School. Davidson, North Carolina. \$300.
Children's Community School Gardens. Several native plants gardens including a dinosaur garden, a butterfly garden, an art garden, and an alphabet garden, will be added to two small existing native plant communities. They believe an effective school connects people, to create a community. (*Partners at Large*)

Winnemucca Community Garden. Winnemucca, Nevada. \$300.
Nevada Basin & Range Plant Demonstration. The Nevada Basin and Range Plant Demonstration project will be an educational area that shows the native plant communities found in northern Nevada's basin and range region, complete with accompanying lesson plans and signs. (*Partners at Large*)

Wauwatosa West High School. Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. \$300.
Tosa Prairies & Woodlands. This project will increase environmental awareness and respect within Wauwatosa School District students and the community by establishing a savanna and wooded area on district grounds to inspire community members to plant native plants in their own yards. (*Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr Chapter*)

Knollwood Elementary School. Decatur, Georgia. \$300. Bird Habitat and Feeding Area. The Brown Thrasher's Bird Club, sponsored by Knollwood Elementary School, plans to create a bird habitat/feeding area using native plants to provide habitat and attract birds that don't normally come to seed feeders, such as catbirds, mockingbirds, bluebirds, brown thrashers, northern flickers, robins, and cedar waxwings. (*Partners at Large*)

River Revitalization Foundation. Milwaukee, Wisconsin. \$210.
Brown Deer Riparian Woodland Restoration Project. Having recently acquired 2-1/2 acres in the Village of Brown Deer, along the Southbranch Creek, a tributary of the Milwaukee River, their goals are to enhance wildlife habitat, while engaging public involvement in habitat restoration, for the purpose of outdoor education and a greater appreciation for nature. (*Milwaukee-North Chapter*)

For a listing of previous SFE grant recipients go to www.for-wild.org/seedmony.htm.



The Success of these Projects

The success of these projects will depend in part upon the organization and its members who have developed them. The rest of the success will come from the community at large. Besides promoting the benefits of the project to the organization's members, it will also be important for project coordinators to educate the community – neighbors, friends, other organizations – about the benefits of using native plants in landscaping.

That is where Wild Ones Chapters and their members and Wild Ones partners-at-large come in. The Wild Ones members who are located in areas near the SFE grant recipient projects should not hesitate to offer their help to these projects. Knowledgeable and dedicated Wild Ones members will make all the difference in the world to the success of these outdoor learning centers.

When the grant requirements are met, which includes a yearend report, each recipient will receive a Wild Ones yard sign for their site to show the project truly is in harmony with nature. And, we will publish a synopsis of their report in the *Wild Ones Journal* and on the Wild Ones web site.



SFE Nursery Partners

Each year, nursery partners supply seeds, plants, discounts, and of course, advice to grant recipients in their areas.

By participating in the Wild Ones SFE program, our nursery partners demonstrate their commitment to natural landscaping. Many also advertise in the *Wild Ones Journal*, and have joined us as business members. We thank them for their support.

Grant recipients are encouraged to contact the nursery partners for seeds and plant materials. Using native grass and forb plants and seeds that originated as close as possible to the project site will go a long way toward ensuring a project's success.

In addition to the seeds, plants, and discounts from nursery partners, each grant recipient also received a copy of the Wild Ones video, "A Tapestry of Learning: Creating School Natural Areas" to use in future development efforts, and a one-year subscription to the *Wild Ones Journal*.

The nursery partners who will be working with this year's grant recipients, and their specialties with respect to each of the projects, are as follows. For a complete listing of all nurseries who have volunteered to partner with the SFE program in the past, go to www.for-wild.org/seedmony.htm.

Georgia

Eco-Gardens (404) 294-6468 Trees and shrubs.

Indiana

JFNew Native Plant Nursery with regional offices in Chicago, Illinois; eastern and western Michigan; Cincinnati, Ohio; and Madison, Wisconsin (574) 586-2412. jfritz@jfnew.com. Prairie forbs and grass seeds, prairie forbs, grass and wet mesic plants.

Minnesota

Prairie Restorations, Inc./Boreal Natives (218) 729-7001. prairie@cpinternet.com. Prairie forbs, wet mesic and grass seeds.

Out Back Nursery (800) 651-3626. tom@outbacknursery.com. Prairie forbs, grass and wet mesic plants, trees and shrubs.

North Carolina

Dearness Gardens (704) 875-8234. dearness@charlotte.twcbc.com. Trees and shrubs, azaleas and rhododendron, perennial plants.

Nevada

Comstock Seed (775) 265-0090. ed@comstockseed.com. Prairie forbs and grass seeds.

New York

Southern Tier Consulting and Nursery Inc. (800) 848-7614. froghome@southerntierconsulting.com. Wetland plants and seeds, wet mesic plants and seeds.

Amanda's Garden (585) 669-2275. amandasgarden@bluefrog.com. Shade plants.

Maple Hill Nursery and Landscaping (315) 682-8835. maplehill8@msn.com. Trees and shrubs, prairie and wet mesic plants.

South Carolina

Lichtenfelt Nurseries (864) 458-9864. Perennial plants, trees and shrubs

Texas

Natives of Texas (830) 896-2169. dwinningham@mac.com. Trees and shrubs, perennial plants.

Dodds Family Tree Nursery (830) 997-9571. Vines, prairie forbs and grass plants.

Medina Garden Nursery (830) 589-2771. Prairie plants.

Utah

Great Basin Native Plants (435) 795-2303. gbn@greatbasinnatives.com. Cactus and succulents seed, prairie forbs and grasses, shade plants, trees and shrubs.

West Virginia

Sunshine Farm and Gardens Barry@sunfarm.com. Prairie forbs and grass seeds, prairie forbs and grass plants, shade plants, wet mesic plants and seeds.

Enchanter's Garden (304) 466-3154. Trees and shrubs, shade plants, vines, prairie forbs and grass plants, trees and shrubs.

Wisconsin

Stone Silo Prairie Gardens, LLP (920) 336-1662. info@stonesiloprariiegardens.com. Prairie forbs and grass plants, ferns, shade plants.

Johnson's Nursery (262) 252-4988. bill@johnsonsnursery.com. Trees and shrubs.

Reeseville Ridge Nursery (920) 927-3291. rrn@charter.net. Shade plants, trees and shrubs.

Prairie Future Seed Co. (262) 820-0221. pfsco@wi.rr.com. Prairie forbs and grass seeds.

Midwest Prairies, LLC (608) 863-3169. ron@midwestprairies.com. Prairie forbs and grass seeds.

Prairie Nursery, Inc. (800) 476-9453. kirks@prairienursery.com. Prairie forbs and grass seeds, prairie forbs and grass plants, shade plants, wet mesic plants and seeds.

devoting much energy to root growth. Their drive is to produce fruit before they die at the end of the growing season. Lawns which occupy hundreds of thousands of acres, while perennial, are managed, and typically do not extend more than 6 inches into the upper soil.

Is it something that we do?

What is done differently in the practice of growing native plants? We burn our native plantings periodically, returning nutrients bound up in the bodies and duff to the soil. We may mulch-mow the plantings at the end of the growing season, or just let the dead plant material stand into the next growing season; either way the dead organic material is permitted to disintegrate into the soil. When establishing a native planting on previously broken soil, recognizing that this soil may be lacking in humus, we may add organic matter in the form of compost or wood chips.

Otherwise, what matters most is probably what we do *not* do: We do not disturb the soil in the root zone; we do not till, fertilize, or use chemicals.

These management techniques are very different from those used in the typical flower beds or in some agricultural fields. Most agricultural fields and food-plant gardens are tilled annually. The same is often true for displays of bedding plants. To induce maximal production in the shortest period of time, they are fertilized heavily with chemical salts – the plants are protected from pests with panoplies of pesticides – and herbicides are used to prevent competition from “weeds.” Except for the tilling, this latter management regimen is used with lawns and with beds of perennial exotics.

Is it something about the soil they grow in?

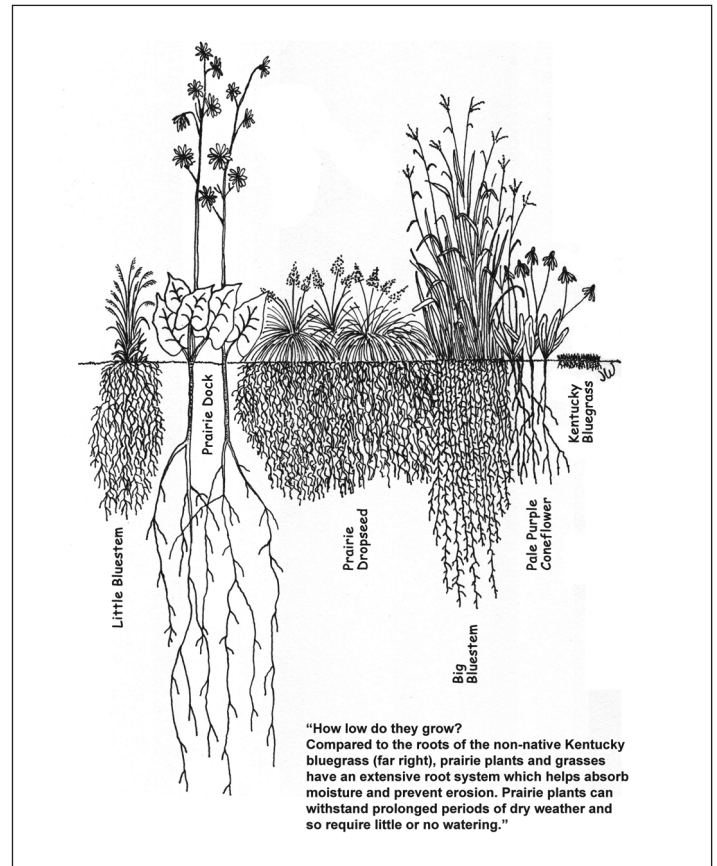
With this question we get closer to our answer, especially in light of the answers to the previous questions.

When we think of the “Web of Life” or the “Food Web,” we think of lions and tigers and bears. We think of the birds and the bees, and we think of all the animals that are going extinct in the rain forests. In recent decades more and more information has been published about the “Soil Food Web” and its various trophic levels (who eats what or whom). The density and biodiversity of life in healthy soil rivals the diversity we are aware of above ground.

Dr. Elaine Ingham of Oregon State University presented a concise picture in her presentation given on July 18, 1998, at the First Grassroots Gathering on Biodegradation: Genetic Engineering.

“What do we mean, organism-wise, when we talk about soil? Agricultural soil *should* have 600 million bacteria in a teaspoon. There *should* be approximately 3 miles of fungal hyphae in a teaspoon of soil. There *should* be 10,000 protozoa and 20 to 30 beneficial nematodes in a teaspoon of soil. No root-feeding nematodes. If there are root-feeding nematodes, that’s an indicator of a sick soil. There *should* be roughly 200,000 microarthropods in a square meter of soil to a 10-inch depth. All these organisms *should* be there in a healthy soil.

“If those conditions are present in an agricultural soil, there will be adequate disease suppression so that it is not necessary to apply fungicides, bactericides, or nematicides. There should be 40 percent to 80 percent of the root system of the plants colonized by mycorrhizal fungi, which will protect those roots against disease.



Drawing by Janet Wissink.

“What happens when you apply most fungicides and pesticides to soil? In every single case where we have looked at food web effects of pesticides, there are non-target organism effects, and usually very detrimental effects. The sets of beneficial organisms that suppress disease are reduced. Organisms that cycle nitrogen from plant-not-available forms into plant-available forms are killed. Organisms that retain nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur, magnesium, calcium, etc. are killed. Organisms that retain nutrients in the soil are killed. Once retention is destroyed, **where do those nutrients go? They end up in our drinking water; or end up in our ground water.** You and I as taxpayers have to pay in order to clean that water so we can drink it.

“If you grow the proper number and types of bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, microarthropods, and mycorrhizal fungi in the root systems of the plants, you can do away with pesticides. It’s been done. We can reduce significantly the amount of fertilizer that goes into that soil. In experiments that have been done all over the country, all over the world, inorganic fertilizer inputs have been reduced, or are not added at all, without reduction in plant growth.

“If garden soil is healthy, there will be high numbers of bacteria and bacterial-feeding organisms, which means the beneficial, disease-suppressive organisms will be present. If the soil has received heavy treatments of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, soil fungicides, or fumigants that kill these organisms, the tiny critters die, or the balance between the pathogens and beneficial organisms is upset, allowing the opportunist, disease-causing organisms to become problems. *If the*

Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land. By land is meant all of the things on, over, or in the Earth. Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left. That is to say, you cannot love game and hate predators; you cannot conserve the waters and waste the ranges; you cannot build the forest and mine the farm. The land is one organism. Its parts, like our own parts, compete with each other and cooperate with each other. The competitions are as much a part of the inner workings as the cooperations. You can regulate them – cautiously – but not abolish them. Aldo Leopold, 1949, *A Sand County Almanac*.

soil is healthy for the type of vegetation desired, there should be no reason to use pesticides, or fertilizers."

To her testimony might be added the fact that tilling, or any organized disturbance or compaction of the root zone, disrupts the ebb and flow of the web of life in the soil. The life spaces of the micro-critters are torn apart, as are the critters themselves. Webs of mycorrhizal fungi are disconnected and sundered. The gaseous content of the soil is changed, affecting the chemistry within the soil, and carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere. On a continental scale this is what happened when the prairies were broken in North America, the steppes in Eurasia, and the llanos in South America.

The soil food web and native plants are increasingly being recognized as relevant in research into agricultural methods and food production, water quality, air quality, soil quality, invasive species, and most recently bio-energy.

In coming issues of the *Journal* we will discuss soil biodiversity, soil food-web interactions, and the resultant biochemistry. We will elucidate some baffling terminology like "carbon sequestration," "nitrogen fixation," "mineralization," "immobilization," and "photosynthesis." These terms and concepts are essential to understanding how to develop a sustainable lifestyle in our yards and in our plant environment. Through our understanding of our environment and our acceptance of responsibility for that environment, we address the Siamese-twin issues of increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide and climate change – possibly the ultimate destroyer of the delicate life web we depend on.

It seems that in promoting the use of native plantings in our landscapes we Wild Ones are accomplishing much more than we have given ourselves credit for. *

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LORRIE!

A few 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 89. 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 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.

WILD ONES STEWARD

Janice Stiefel

My husband, John, and I had a serendipitous introduction to Wild Ones back in the late summer of 1989. We were taking our annual family bike ride along Brown Deer Road, in Bayside, leading ultimately to the lake front in downtown Milwaukee. As we were riding on Brown Deer Road we noticed a huge berm with blooming wild flowers like purple coneflower, cup-plant, prairie coneflower, wild senna, wild bergamot, black-eyed Susans – all the exciting plants I had been trying to include in a wild planting we had started in our own yard.



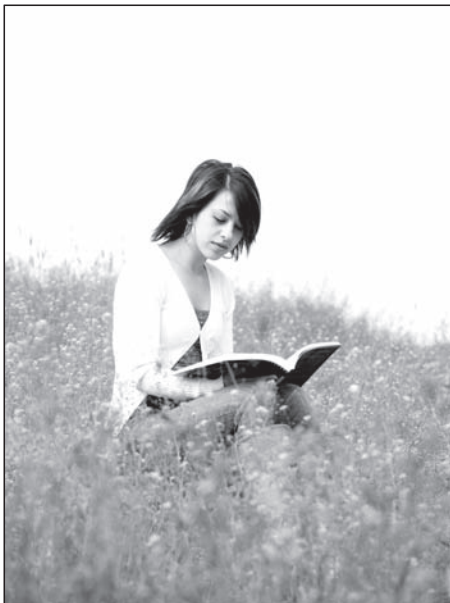
As we brought our bikes to a screeching, abrupt halt, we stopped to admire the flowers and grasses and the secret pathways that led to an unknown location. As we were aspiring to venture down one of the paths, an enthusiastic young boy suddenly appeared and asked if we would like to meet his mother because she had planted all those flowers. Of course, we wanted to meet her. And what a delight she was – charming, lovely, effervescent, and personable. Her name was Julie Marks.

She told us that she was the treasurer of a wildflower organization called Wild Ones that met at the Milwaukee Audubon Nature Center, located at the east end of Brown Deer Road. She invited us to one of their meetings. That was the first time we had ever heard of Wild Ones. We attended the next meeting and met many friendly, exuberant, people who were interested in native wildflowers, as well as protecting the environment. We thought we had died and gone to heaven. We met Lorrie Otto, the group's founder, and what an inspiration she was. Personally, I was in awe of her commitment, her ability to speak to an audience with ease, her goals and accomplishments, her captivating demeanor, and her attractive jacket of many colors.

At that meeting in the fall of 1989, we also met the sparkling personality of the president, Deb Harwell. In the course of my conversation with her, I happened to mention that I had been writing a "Wild Flora-of-the-Month" column since 1988 for the *Depot Dispatch* in Elkhart Lake. She asked if I would do the same for the Wild Ones' newsletter, *The Inside Story*. I was honored to be asked, and couldn't wait to share the incredible stories behind each plant. This conversation with Deb Harwell in 1989 was the genesis of "The Inside Story," which began with the March/April, 1990, issue of *The Outside Story*. The first plant profiled was skunk cabbage. Since that is one of the first wildflowers to appear after a long, cold winter, it was a perfect beginning for a column that has spanned more than a decade.

It is with great respect and admiration that John and I salute Wild Ones on their 25th anniversary. Lorrie Otto has made a lasting societal impact in how we all envision the environment and the potential of our own private property. We have been encouraged to dare to be different, and to stem the tidal wave of mowed lawns sweeping the country. – Janice Stiefel, October 1, 2002.

Janice Stiefel died peacefully in the presence of her family, Tuesday evening, March 18, 2008. A memorial fund is being established to publish her 71 "The Inside Story" articles which appeared in the Wild Ones Journal and other periodicals from 1990 to 2002. Please send your donations made out to Wild Ones FBO Janice Stiefel Memorial, to Wild Ones, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, WI 54912.



Time to Get Outside and Read a Good Book

Here in the *Wild Ones Journal* we mention lots of good books for anyone interested in native plants, natural landscaping, climate change, and many other topics. If you share our desire to learn more about the natural world, we think there's no better place to start looking than the **Wild Ones Amazon-Associate Bookstore**.

All the important books on these topics are available through Amazon at significant discounts – so next time you're looking for a good book, a DVD, a computer, some software, or just about anything fun or interesting, check out our Wild Ones Amazon-Associate Bookstore. And remember that Amazon pays Wild Ones a nice commission for almost every purchase. www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore.

Write for the Journal

Do you have something you'd like to say? Or some facts you'd like to report? We'd like to hear it, and maybe other Wild Ones members would be interested, too.

Journal editor, Maryann Whitman, keeps us informed every issue with her famous "Grapevine" column, but now she's decided to give you a chance to have your say.

Send Maryann an e-mail (journal@for-wild.org), and tell her what you have in mind. Maybe you'll see your own name in lights soon – or at least here in the *Wild Ones Journal*.

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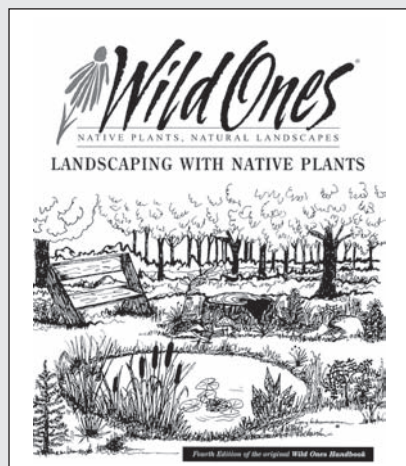


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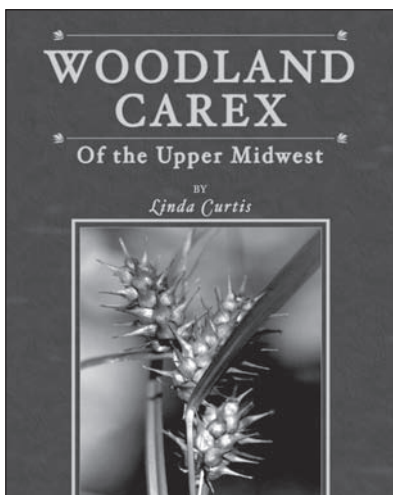


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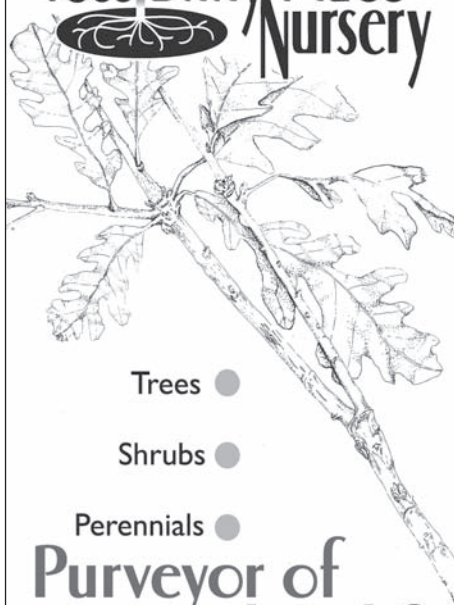
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Chapter Notes

In addition to the usual monthly meeting presentations and tours, the year-end "State of the Chapter" reports have listed some very interesting highlights.

Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter had joint programs with a number of local organizations, including the Michigan Botanical Club, and the Ann Arbor Garden Club, as well as the **Toledo (OH) Chapter**. Next year, they hope to team with the Stewardship Network for some programs.

Arrowhead (MN) Chapter teamed with two other local groups to offer a series of community-education classes on environmentally-friendly gardening. Sessions on landscape planning based on the "Observational Design" section of the Wild Ones *Landscaping with Native Plants* book were extremely popular.

Central Upper Peninsula (MI) Chapter kept up with their emphasis on local programs within the community: The forestry restoration project at Rapid River High School, the development of the Gladstone Nature Preserve, the stabilization of the Ford River embankment, and also presented books to the Escanaba and Gladstone public libraries.

Columbus (OH) Chapter conducted monthly meetings and lectures, had members attend the National Convention at Bergamo, and completed The Whetstone Prairie and Native Habitat Project – a 5-acre prairie with vernal pools, a demonstration garden, and educational signage, which has become a permanent garden in the Columbus Park System.

Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter held their 11th annual natural landscaping conference, *Toward Harmony with Nature*, awarded three grants of about \$500 each through their Landscaping for Tomorrow grant program, held their annual native plant sale, providing a source of nursery-grown native plants for area residents, and put forth a matching 1:2 grant challenge to other Wild Ones chapters to help raise money for the new EcoCenter and Wild Ones Headquarters.

Greater Cincinnati (OH) Chapter co-hosted, with the Civic Garden Center, a symposium on invasive plants, and hosted the Wild Ones National Annual Meeting at Mt. St. John/Bergamo near Dayton, Ohio.

Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter, in addition to their monthly membership meetings, also hold an annual Wild Ones Show Me-Help Me Day, have two yearly plant exchanges, and establish and maintain native plantings in the community, mostly on public lands, through their "Community Projects" program.

Lexington (KY) Chapter combined efforts with the long-suspended **Frankfort (KY) Chapter**, and successfully began holding monthly programs and tours. They are looking forward to an eventful 2008.

Louisville Metro (KY) Chapter staffed tables at several garden shows and plant sales in the area, and continued its series of monthly work days in the Wildflower Woods area of Cherokee Park.

Mid-Missouri (MO) Chapter held a plant seed-starting workshop, gave out native trees at their Earth Day celebration, and held their annual joint meeting with the **St. Louis (MO) Chapter**, during which they toured **Mid-Missouri (MO) Chapter's** local projects and community native plantings.

Mid-Mitten (MI) Chapter, one of the newer Wild Ones chapters, continues to receive more and more requests to do talks at local garden clubs and other groups.



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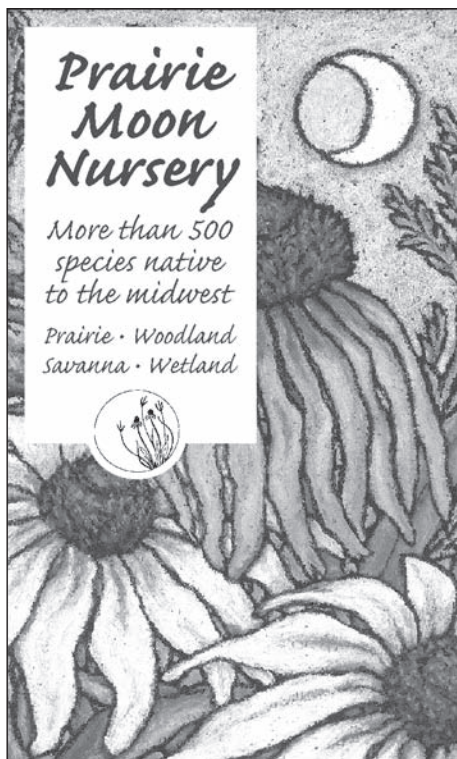
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Mountain Laurel Chapter #78
Kathy T. Dame 860-439-2144
ktdam@conncoll.edu

ILLINOIS

Greater DuPage Chapter #9
Pat Clancy 630-964-0448 pjclancy@yahoo.com

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

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

North Park Chapter #27
Wilma McCallister
bug788@gmail.com

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

INDIANA

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

KENTUCKY

Lexington Chapter #64
Linda Porter 859-936-1927 lindaann44@adelphia.net

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

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

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

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

Kalamazoo Area Chapter #37
Dave Wendling 269-624-6946 davewndling@aol.com
Tom Small 269-381-4946 yard2prairy@aol.com

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

River City Chapter #83
Carol Phelps 616-233-0833

MINNESOTA

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

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

St. Cloud Chapter #29
Brian Johnson 320-356-9462 bjohnson@csbsju.edu

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

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Mid-Missouri Chapter #49
Scott Hamilton 573-882-9909 x3257
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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
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Michelle Vanstrom 716-745-7625
vanshel400@aol.com

OHIO

Greater Cincinnati Chapter #62
Chris McCullough 513-860-4959 gordchris@fuse.net

Columbus Chapter #4
Jann Offutt joffutt@columbus.rr.com
Sam Pathy pathy.sam@gmail.com

Toledo Chapter #77
Erika Buri 419-882-8313x29 eburi@sev.org

Western Reserve Chapter #73
Barb Holtz 440-473-3370
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PENNSYLVANIA

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Maureen Carbery 484-678-6200
pahabitat@comcast.net

WISCONSIN

Central Wisconsin Chapter #50
Dan Dieterich 715-346-2849
dan.dieterich@uwsp.edu

Door County Chapter #59
Peter Sigman 920-824-5193 peter@sigmann.net

Fox Valley Area Chapter #8
Karen Syverson 920-987-5587 ksyve@centurytel.net

Green Bay Chapter #10
James Havel jhavel@releeinc.com
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Lake Woods Chapter #72
Jeanne Munz 920-793-4452
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Madison Chapter #13
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*All members are invited and encouraged to
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2nd Quarter 2008. Duluth, Minnesota.
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**3rd Quarter 2008 and Annual Meeting and
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4th Quarter 2008. Midland, Michigan.
Tentatively October 4. Hosted by the Mid-Mitten
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Wanted: Small-Space Natural Landscapes to Photograph

Author Lynn Steiner is looking for gardens and landscapes to photograph for her next book, tentatively titled, *Nature in a Small Space*.

The book will provide information to successfully create a natural landscape in small spaces found in the city and suburbs, using plants appropriate for the Upper Midwest. While the main focus will be on using North-American natives, the book will also include non-native plants that do well in the Upper Midwest with minimal care.

If you have, or know of anyone who has, a landscape or garden that would be appropriate for Lynn to photograph, she would like to hear about it. She will give credit to homeowners and/or designers in the caption if they'd like, and make sure they get a complimentary copy of the book when it is published.

Lynn plans to begin photographing spring 2008, and finish by summer 2009. She will travel throughout the Upper Midwest to find appropriate landscapes. Contact Lynn Steiner at 651-433-5360, or theseiners2@frontiernet.net.

Lynn Steiner's other books include *Landscaping with Native Plants of Minnesota*, *Landscaping with Native Plants of Michigan*, and *Landscaping with Native Plants of Wisconsin*. Signed copies of these books are available through the Wild Ones Bookstore, www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore/.

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THANK YOU

Seeds for Education

Mark & Terri Chelmowski and Dan Fromm Milwaukee-North (WI) Chapter

Donna M. Gager Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

Kay Blair, Candace Ridlbauer, Betty & Lowell Edwards, and Ken &

Donna Schenk Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter

Jane Cornelius Partner at Large

Cathy Wood Arrowhead (MN) Chapter

Detroit Metro (MI) Chapter

Matching Donations

Received from **Ameriprise**, a 3:1 match for **John Arthur**, Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

Received from **HSBC**, a 1:1 match for **Margo Hickman**, Lake-To-Prairie (IL) Chapter

General Operating Fund

Catherine M. Davis Red Cedar (MI) Chapter

Thank you to everyone who is using **GoodSearch** as your Internet search engine. GoodSearch's 2008 donation to Wild Ones amounted to \$96.34

Thank you also goes to everyone who is connecting to **Amazon** through the Wild Ones bookstore connection. During the past two months we have received \$166.24 in rebates from Amazon.

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 large and small – including a our first stock transfer which netted \$21,100. That, plus a couple of sizeable donations from other Wild Ones members have enabled us to meet the 1:2 challenge from our **anonymous Illinois member** for another \$20,000 toward the development of the Wild Ones EcoCenter and HQ. Thank you all. We'll recognize you formally at some future date.

Fox Valley Area Chapter \$20,000 1:2 Challenge ended March 1, 2008.

Recent donations have brought the total chapters participating in the Fox Valley Area Chapter's (FVAC) challenge to **30 out of 42 chapters**. We received this note from Co-President Sam Pathy: "**Columbus Wild Ones** members donated \$450 toward projects for the new national EcoCenter in Appleton, Wisconsin. Our chapter matched the first \$200, bringing our contribution to \$650."

Thank you all so very much. That also means that FVAC will be donating only \$7,054 of their offered \$20,000 toward the EcoCenter. Perhaps we can challenge FVAC to come up with a new challenge to the chapters to support the Wild Ones EcoCenter.

Ann Arbor Chapter	.....	\$150
Arrowhead Chapter	.....	100
Calhoun Chapter	.....	250
Central Upper Peninsula Chapter	.....	100
Central Wisconsin Chapter	.....	1000
Columbus Chapter	.....	650
Detroit Metro Chapter	.....	250
Door County Chapter	.....	200
Gibson Woods Chapter	.....	100
Greater Cincinnati Chapter	.....	1000
Greater DuPage Chapter	.....	300
Habitat Resource Network of SE PA	.....	200
Kalamazoo Area Chapter	.....	250
Lake-To-Prairie Chapter	.....	250
Lake Woods Chapter	.....	200
Madison Chapter	.....	500
Mid-Missouri Chapter	.....	100
Milwaukee Southwest/Wehr Chapter	.....	400
North Park Nature Center Chapter	.....	250
Oakland Chapter	.....	2000
Otter Tail Chapter	.....	200
Red Cedar Chapter	.....	100
River City Chapter	.....	50
Rock River Valley Chapter	.....	1770
Root River Chapter	.....	1500
St Croix Oak Savanna Chapter	.....	200
St Louis Chapter	.....	888
Twin Cities Chapter	.....	1000
Western Reserve Chapter	.....	200
Wolf River Chapter	.....	100
Total	.....	\$14,258
Fox Valley Area Chapter	.....	\$7,129
Grand Total to Date	.....	\$21,387

Thank you to the boards and the rest of the members of all these Wild Ones chapters for taking up FVAC's challenge. Wild Ones National appreciates your donations toward the chapter's challenge. — Donna