This is a follow-up to “Thinking About Mycorrhizae,” which appeared in the January/February issue of the Wild Ones Journal. Please consult the illustration as you read the article.

Getting to know about mycorrhizae is one of the most important things that a native plant person can accomplish. It is almost entirely because of this relationship that our native plants don’t need to be artificially fertilized or watered after they are established. A plant, on its own, has access to a limited pool of nutrients, and these have to be carried by water. The plant is not capable of the chemistry necessary to break down organic molecules in the soil – fungi are. Plant roots can extend into a limited range of the soil; fungal hyphae can be meters long, branched, growing upward and sideways as necessary. Even the tiniest roots of plants are twenty times thicker than the hyphae of fungi, so they are not as able to absorb some exceptionally thin films of water-bearing nutrients – something the hyphae can do easily. (Think of a fat straw and a thin straw taking up the last bit of soda in the bottom of a glass.)

We frequently refer to the extensive volumes of roots that our native plants grow. This attribution to all native plants can be somewhat misleading. Think about the roots of plants that grow, not in the deep prairie soils of Iowa, but in thin, poor, rocky soils in upstate New York, and the desert soils of the Southwest. These plants, too, are able to survive and prosper because of their relationship with the fungi in the soil.
If you love winter like I do, you would love a day like today. We’re staying in a comfy cabin near Cable, Wisconsin, enjoying friends and the perfect day: Twenty-two degrees F, no wind, jumbo flakes floating down. I met with Sarah Boles, a Wild Ones “Partner at Large” member who lives in the area, for a cross-country ski outing. As we skied through a great grove of hemlock trees (one of my favorites), I reflected on the great friendships and networks that Wild Ones has brought into my life. 

At the annual conference last August in Appleton, Wisconsin, the Marketing Committee conducted a survey that included the question: What do you find to be the three main benefits of Wild Ones membership? I was not surprised to see “Wild Ones is a good source of information” ranking high, but was interested to see that it fell in at number two – second to answers along the lines of “meeting like minded people” and “support group.” The third most common benefit listed we grouped as “advocacy” – supporting the native plant movement in general.

When we are able, our family donates to a number of causes for advocacy reasons. With Wild Ones we get both – supporting the mission as well as more personal benefits. These range from education, like the Ecoscaper self-paced learning and certification program and chapter programs, to the support one gets from meeting others directly or through our online discussion group. As the extent of the geographic area covered by Wild Ones members broadens and we gain more members via our web site, we will have to continue to look for ways to help our “partners at large” (non-chapter members) reap the benefits of member networking as well.

If you are a member, new or old, who has enjoyed benefits of membership, we could use your help. Our National Membership Committee, which has not been active for a while, is re-forming, and will soon begin “meeting” again via occasional conference calls. One of the first topics this committee will tackle is looking for ways to meet the challenge described above. If you have an interest in this topic or suggestions to share, please contact me at carol_andrews@hotmail.com or better yet by phone at 218/390-8981.

Carol Andrews, Wild Ones National President
president@for-wild.org
Somewhere between a prairie and a formal planting lies the fertile potential of native plants in ornamental design, the domain of the Ecocaper – which is a brilliant synthesis in language of the two concepts, landscaper and ecologist. With this in mind, Wild Ones has developed the Ecocaper Certification Program. Enhance your knowledge and get credit for your accomplishments. Visit www.wildcertification.org for more information or to enroll.

Storm Lichens

Article and photos by John Pearson

Crusty snow crunches under my boots as I wander through my backyard after the ice storm. The lawn is littered with broken branches, ranging from twigs to major limbs, all snapped off during the big ice storm that passed through southern Iowa on December 11, 2007. They will become a brush pile when I eventually get around to cleaning up the mess. Today, however, I am not interested in tidiness or in creating rabbit shelters. I am too busy hunting lichens.

The days following an ice storm or wind storm are great for lichen hunting. Many lichens – unique organisms consisting of a symbiotic growth of fungi and algae – grow on trees, often forming colorful and interesting patches on trunks and twigs. Although they will grow on shaded tree trunks, the best habitat on a tree for many lichens is on high branches where they have access to full sunlight. The lichen communities found on high branches are normally out of the reach and sight of human observers except when breakage brings branches to the ground, where they can be easily examined.

“There!” I mutter to myself, kneeling to pick up a coarse branch that has fallen from a large bur oak tree. The upper surface of its black, furrowed bark is nearly covered with patches of gray rosette lichen (Physcia stellaris) and orange sunburst lichen (Xanthoria weberi). There are three general growth forms of lichens: foliose (resembling leaves), fruticose (resembling tiny shrubs), and crustose (crust-like). These two species are foliose with a rumpled body (thallus), resembling the frilly paper decoration pasted around the rim of a Valentine’s heart.

Inspecting the rosette lichen with a hand lens, I see dozens of black discs raised on short pedestals above the thallus. These are apothecia, the fruiting bodies of the fungal partner in the lichen. Shifting my view to the sunburst lichen, I see no apothecia, but instead see hundreds of tiny grains of greenish-white soredia (minute balls of tissue containing both fungal and algal cells) lining the lobed edges of the thallus. Reproduction of lichens is complex: Apothecia produce only fungal spores which disperse on the wind, and will (if landing in suitable habitat) give rise to a fungus, not a lichen. A new lichen will form from these germinating fungal spores only if they come in contact with the right species of algae and spontaneously form a new association. (Lichenologist joke: a lichen consists of a fungus and an alga that have taken a “likin’” to each other.) Soredia, on the other hand, disperse from the original lichen as a pre-mixed concoction of vegetative fungal and algal cells, needing only to land in the right habitat to start growth. Lichens can also reproduce by fragmentation when pieces breaking off the original organism become established as new individuals.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
Plants in very rich, moist, organic soils can do without mycorrhizae and in fact often do. Plants that are heavily fertilized can also do without mycorrhizae.

The mycorrhizal fungi, on the other hand, need their relationship with plants in order to have access to the carbon-rich products of photosynthesis. They also survive better through a northern winter if they have live roots available – roots of the sort that our native perennial grasses, trees, and forbs provide. The undisturbed soil that carries no fungicides or other chemicals which can surround our native plants is also a definite plus.

**The word is mycorrhiza**

A mycorrhiza is the term for the relationship between a fungus and a green plant. This strange relationship borrows from both partners for its name: “myco” comes from the same Greek root as mycology, the study of mushrooms; the “rhiza” comes from the Greek word for root. (The extra “r” is stuck in to make the word easier to pronounce – a massive failure, I think.)

From evidence in fossil records it seems that mycorrhizae played an integral role in the evolution of land plants. While we are currently aware of seven or eight types of mycorrhiza, the arbuscular mycorrhizae (AM) were actually an ancestral “characteristic” of all land plants – and then came roots. Nevertheless, AM are still around today.

Several orders of fungi are capable of forming AM. One order (Glomales), are the most common, and can be found everywhere on the planet. These fungi form the most frequent type of mycorrhiza.

**Ninety percent of all plant families contain arbuscular mycorrhizae species.**

**Arbuscular mycorrhizal relationship**

In this type of mycorrhizal relationship the plant root is a habitat for the fungus. In arbuscular mycorrhizae the fungus penetrates into the roots of a plant, growing between the root cells, into the part of the root where the products of photosynthesis, carbohydrates, are stored – the cortex. To exchange nutrients absorbed from the soil for the carbohydrates, the fungal hyphae penetrate the cell walls and grow into tree-like structures called “arbuscules.” The plant cells cooperatively accommodate this intrusion. Both plant and fungus maintain their integrity; the cytoplasmic fluids do not come into contact – they do not actually “swap spit.” It is through this extensive membrane interface that nutrient transfer between plant and fungus occurs, in molecular form. Phosphorus is thought to be the principle nutrient provided, though other micronutrients and even nitrogen can be involved.

**Ectomycorrhizal relationship**

Another type of mycorrhiza is termed ectomycorrhizal (EM) because of the way it interacts with a plant. A great diversity of fungal species are capable of forming EM, but, oddly, a relatively small group of plant taxa are involved. While arbuscular mycorrhizae are found in about ninety percent of plant families encompassing grasses, forbs, and some woody, ectomycorrhizae are found in about ten percent of plant families, and the vast majority of them are woody (almost all the members of the oak and pine families).

In EM the fungus covers the outside of the plant root with a layer – a mantle of hyphae, that lie in contact with the ectoderm – the absorptive cells of the root, with intermittent hyphal penetrations into the root, between the storage, cortical cell walls. In the case of EM the cortical cells too, may be surrounded by a “fabric” of hyphae called a “Hartig net.” The fungus and the plant essentially fuse walls, while maintaining their integrity; the hyphae do not penetrate the plant cell walls. A single tree may be host to dozens of fungal partners on different parts of its root system. The fungal species are not dedicated to single plants. Unlike AM, most EM fungi produce “rhizomorphs” in the soil – thick bundles of many hyphae which have the tensile strength to extend meters into the soil before they branch out into feeder hyphae. Additionally, EM fungi often secrete auxins, growth hormones that can influence direction of root growth and branching.

**Fungi as decomposers**

The fungi that form ectomycorrhizal relationships, and others that are not mycorrhizal, are evolutionarily newer than arbuscule-producing fungi – and have enzyme systems unknown in plants. These enzymes are capable of breaking down organic matter, and as a result, these fungi predominate in the litter layer. Fungi are the only organisms that are capable of efficiently breaking down lignin in dead wood, into a fluid that they can ingest. When the fungal hyphae die, all these reconstituted nutrients and minerals are released into the soil, feeding other microbiota and ultimately plants. The nutrients may also be taken directly to plants. The value of fungi as decomposers cannot be overstated. Life on this planet would be quite different without them.

So what does all this mean to our native plants? Let’s go back to the May/June 2008 issue of the Journal, wherein appeared this paragraph:

_Have you ever wondered why we can say that our native plants don’t 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? Is it something about the medium they grow in? All are good possibilities._

With our better understanding of the soil food web, which includes the mycor-

SIDEBAR

**Not All Plants Have Mycorrhizae**

Many plants do not have mycorrhizae, but that is a subject for another discussion. Among plants that don’t have mycorrhizae: floating aquatic plants, with roots that don’t touch the soil; parasitic plants; carnivorous plants; plants that don’t have roots; rooted aquatic plants, with roots in an anaerobic environment. Most annuals are non-mycorrhizal: Their life span is too short for the expenditure of energy, both on the part of the fungus and the plant. Plants that live on highly disturbed soil are frequently non-mycorrhizal as the hyphae are few and far between.

Some plants produce such prolific clusters of root hairs from the endodermis that the plants may collect enough nutrients unassisted. Others, like the _Cyperaceae_ (think penn sedge _[Carex pensylvanica]_), may secrete organic acids that can make phosphorus available to them. Some grasses and many monocots have exceptionally dense, fibrous root masses that are functionally similar to the proliferation of root hairs.
rhizal fungi, we are in a better position to answer all those questions.

On the other hand, if you like to collect mushrooms keep this in mind: A lot of ectomycorrhizal fungi also produce mushroom bodies. Ectomycorrhizae occur primarily in oak, pine, and spruce trees. Along with open fields, hickories, maples, and black cherries have primarily arbuscular mycorrhizae: No mushrooms.

One of the best sites I have found on the web is:
http://americanmushrooms.com/
Another excellent site: www.mykoweb.com/articles.html
My sincere thanks to Sandy Scheine of the Oakland (MI) Chapter, who read this article and made valuable suggestions. She is a mushroom person and the Education Committee Chair for the North American Mycological Association.

Ectomycorrhizal fungi on plant roots, with long, thread-like hyphae extending into the soil. Photo courtesy of Paula Flynn, Iowa State University Extension.

Congratulations to Our Newest Lifetime Members
Carol Delheimer
Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter
Charlotte Adelman & Bernard Schwartz
North Park Village Nature Center (IL) Chapter
Thank you for your support and your dedication to Wild Ones.

★★★★★★★★
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The Wild Ones National Board is pleased to be able to offer this special way to show your support of Wild Ones and its mission. $1,200 per household, payable over three years. Not inheritable.
Applies to household, which includes children under 18 years of age.
Local chapters will still receive their annual dues reimbursement for lifetime members. One address per membership.
Contact the National Office, toll-free at 877-3944-9453 for details.

Wild Ones Legacy Program

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There are many ways to help Wild Ones promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities.

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Volunteer: More than 4,000 people annually volunteer their time and energy for land conservation, and community garden plantings and for the Wild Ones EcoCenter.

Lifetime Members: Long-term commitment to Wild Ones mission and its goals.

For more information on supporting Wild Ones through the Get Wild Stay Wild Program, please contact Donna VanBuecken, Executive Director, Wild Ones, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912 877-394-9453 execdirector@for-wild.org, or check us out at our web site: www.for-wild.org/legacy/.

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The Magic Beans

By Barbara Bray

They were my magic beans – little brown packages of life’s necessities surrounded by a waterproof coating courtesy of Mother Nature. Gifted to me from a friend’s garden, these special “beans” were tough little babies. Before I could lay them in their bed, I treated them like any good mother would: I scratched their coats with sandpaper and soaked them in water overnight. Tucked into the soft warm dirt, the tiny seeds began to grow. The scratches in their coats allowed moisture to seep inside the seeds and awaken the embryo, or baby plant. Growth was slow the first two years, as the baby stretched its roots into the life-giving soil. Above ground, fleshy green seed leaves followed by a few bluish-green compound leaves announced the successful emergence of a new plant in my garden. Year two, my “baby” greeted me with a brand new look – a light green stalk resembling asparagus.

The special seeds that I had carefully tucked into the soil belong to a plant called *baptisia alba var. macrophylla*, or white wild indigo. My first experience with this plant took my breath away when I saw the spikes of white flowers rising from stout stems. I knew that one day I would want to grow this extraordinary member of the Bean family (*Fabaceae*). White wild indigo is not only a beautiful plant, but in many ways is magical. In spite of starting its life as a tiny seed, it grows almost shrub-sized, reaching anywhere from three to six feet tall. The interesting pea-type flowers reach toward the sky, looking like little white dog faces with yellow noses. But this is the description of a mature white wild indigo. My indigo didn’t bloom until the third year.

Waiting patiently through each winter, I would often gaze out the window at the spot in my garden bed where indigo slept. Like a good mother, I worried whether my “baby” was warm enough and whether it was healthy. In the spring of the third year, I jumped for joy when I saw my indigo emerge like a fat asparagus spear. Filled with energy and vitality, the shoot lengthened upward and outward with trifoliate leaves. Then the buds appeared on two stalks. White flowers opened, bloomed, and then fell to the ground. Fall came. The stalks dried into a charcoal gray color. Eventually the cold winds of winter rolled the old stems away.

Years four and five were years of change and growth. The white wild indigo reached four feet tall, grew two new stems, and widened its reach as well. Flowering expanded over the top of the plant in several locations as if to attract attention far and wide. Bumblebee workers zoomed in to investigate the flowers, as did an excited ruby-throated hummingbird. The hummingbird accidently found my garden because of several red plastic flags I had stuck in the ground marking new plants. After all the flowers had bloomed, it appeared that a few seed pods might form, but nothing developed. Maybe next year.

As the coolness of fall spread over the garden, and daylight lessened, the stems of the indigo plant once again dried into a charcoal gray sculpture of intertwined branches and leaves. Mid-November the stems broke loose and the winds set it sailing out of my garden – a perfect method for dispersing seeds. When my indigo rolled away, I wanted to keep it somehow. After my attempt at taming the wild indigo, I realized that it was just like the meatball in the song “On Top of Spaghetti.” So now I will leave you with my special version of that song:

On top of Barb’s garden all covered with forbs,
There grew a baptisia as tall as her door.
She tried to bring it into her house in a vase,
But soon learned its branches took up too much space.
She placed it right out her basement door,
Unaware that the wind would twist ’round its core.
Spinning like a wheel it bumped across the grass,
But reaching the road, it dared not to pass.
The wayward baptisia was spotted by Barb,
Who grabbed it again to keep in her yard.
She tucked it behind stems of rattlesnake master,
But baptisia had other plans to roll even faster.
One December day when arctic winds blew
The baptisia rolled away as it was meant to do.
COVERING THE GROUND WITH INVASIVES
By Janet Allen

INVASIVES ON THE HORIZON

Natural landscaping advocates rejoice when they see homeowners reducing the size of their lawns. This isn’t always good news, though. Back in my conventional landscaping days, I got rid of lawn in places where turf grass didn’t grow well. And what did I plant instead? Groundcovers – the kinds readily available at garden centers and by donations from other gardeners.

Discovering groundcovers

Many years ago when we first moved to our house, I discovered growing here and there a vine with pretty blue flowers. It was periwinkle (Vinca minor), a European native, also called myrtle. I gathered every plant I could find around the yard to fill in a scruffy area in the back. I succeeded. Then I learned that this vine invades natural areas, forming a mat that excludes native plants. I became aware of it growing along roadsides and extending into woodlands.

I recall how pleased I had been to find a whole flat of English ivy (Hedera helix) at the garden center for a good price. I soon had planted the beginnings of a green carpet along my side fence. Long after it had established itself, I learned that this plant, native to parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, is an invasive species in most of the United States. It’s especially harmful since it not only can form a dense mat that excludes native plants, but can also climb trees, weakening or killing them by blocking light or adding so much weight that they’re susceptible to blowing over in storms. It’s also a reservoir for bacterial leaf scorch that can affect trees such as elms, oaks, and maples. And besides spreading vegetatively, it can spread to new areas by seed, courtesy of birds that eat its berries.

I also had planted Japanese pachysandra (Pachysandra terminalis) under bushes and trees, and in areas where nothing else seemed to grow. Is pachysandra invasive? It does not appear on invasive plant lists as consistently as plants such as periwinkle or English ivy. Some areas, however, such as Virginia and Pennsylvania, do report that pachysandra has appeared in natural areas, crowding out native species.

Completing the sorry history of my groundcovering past are sweet woodruff (Galium odoratum), bugleweed (Ajuga reptans), and dead nettle (Lamium galeobdolon). Groundcovers such as these seem to be in the same category as pachysandra – not currently appearing on official invasive plant lists, but often on watch lists, since they’re suspected of invading nearby natural areas. By dumb luck, I never happened to acquire the invasive goutweed (Aegopodium podagraria), a native of Europe and Asia, also known as bishop’s weed or snow-on-the-mountain. I don’t envy my fellow gardeners as they report their endless battles to eradicate this plant.

What to do? Prioritize.

So here I find myself – a native plant advocate, invasive plant enemy – with a yard free of the obvious invasives like burning bush, but finding the remnants of my past lurking at ground level. What to do? Given the difficulty of removing these plants and the cost of replacing them, I’ve established some priorities. My first priority is to eradicate those plants such as English ivy officially identified as invading nearby natural areas and capable of reaching new areas by seed. I’m close to conquering my ivy by having repeatedly pulled it out, trying to leave no bits behind. (I’ve chosen not to use herbicides, though they would be effective.)

My next priority is to remove plants such as periwinkle, identified as invading nearby natural areas by vegetative means. Though in my urban/suburban area they may pose no immediate danger, they do silently promote their own use every time someone admires their pretty flowers and neat growing habit. (Those fortunate enough to live near natural areas have a greater responsibility to eradicate them.) I want to offer the opportunity for people to see examples of our beautiful native plants, as well as to provide native wildlife with the benefits of plants with which they have evolved.

Though it’s a slow process, I’ve been acquiring native plants such as the native pachysandra (Pachysandra procumbens), also known as Allegheny spurge, with the goal of covering the ground with natives instead.

Convincing people to plant something other than these popular groundcovers won’t be easy. Even as native-plant societies and state departments of natural resources report their invasion into natural areas, most university horticulture departments and cooperative extensions are promoting most of them as fine groundcovers. And all conventional garden centers sell them. In fact, the reasons for their invasive tendencies are the same reasons for their popularity. They’re attractive, easy to grow, and form a mat that excludes other plants, providing that green, uniform look characteristic of the turf grass they’re replacing.

As Wild Ones, we can provide a different example. Instead of planting “groundcovers,” we can instead cover the ground with native plants, either used alone for a conventional uniform look, or better yet, mixed together for diversity and to expand the public’s idea of what a landscape can be.

SIDEBAR

Examples of Native Plants to Cover the Ground

Wild ginger (Asarum canadense)

Ferns such as New York fern (Thelypteris noveboracensis)

Partridgeberry (Mitchella repens)

Creeping phlox (Phlox stolonifera)

Green and gold (Chrysogonum virginianum)

Foam flower (Tiarella cordifolia)

Alumroot (Heuchera americana)

Penn sedge (Carex pensylvanica)
Gardening for Life
By Doug Tallamy

Chances are, you have never thought of your garden — indeed, of all of the space on your land — as a wildlife preserve that represents the last chance we have for sustaining plants and animals that were once common throughout the United States. That is exactly the role our suburban landscapes are now playing, and will play even more critically in the near future. If this is news to you, it’s not your fault.

We were taught from childhood that gardens are for beauty; they are a chance to express our artistic talents, to have fun with, and relax in. And, whether we like it or not, the way we landscape our properties is taken by our neighbors as a statement of our wealth and social status.

No one has taught us that we have forced the plants and animals that evolved in North America (our nation’s biodiversity) to depend more and more on human-dominated landscapes for their continued existence. We have always thought that biodiversity was happy somewhere out there — “in nature” — in our local woodlot, or perhaps our national parks, or best of all “in the rain forest.” We have heard nothing about the rate at which species are disappearing from our neighborhoods, towns, counties, and states.

We have never been taught how vital biodiversity is for our own well-being.

**We Have Taken It All**
The population of the United States, now nearing three hundred and six million people, has doubled since most of us were kids, and continues to grow by eighty thousand forty-six people per day. This, coupled with our love affair with the car, and our quest to own ever-larger homes, has fueled urbanized development that continues to sprawl over two million additional acres per year (the size of Yellowstone National Park). We have connected all of our developments with four million miles of roads, and their combined paved surface could occupy roughly the area of Pennsylvania.

Somewhere along the way we decided to convert most of our leisure and decorative places, both at work and at home, into huge expanses of lawn. So far we have planted some forty million acres in lawn. Each weekend we mow to a one-inch height an area the size of Missouri or Oklahoma, and congratulate ourselves on a job well done.

To make things worse, the little woodlots and “open spaces” that we have not paved over or manicured are far from pristine. Nearly all are second-growth that has been thoroughly invaded by alien plants like autumn olive, multiflora rose, Oriental bittersweet, and Japanese honeysuckle. So far, over thirty-four hundred species of alien plants have invaded nearly two hundred million acres of the United States.

To nature lovers these are horrifying statistics. I stress them so that we can clearly understand the challenge before us. We have turned fifty-four percent of the lower forty-eight states into cities and suburbs, and forty-one percent more into various forms of agriculture. That’s right: We humans have taken ninety-five percent of nature and made it unnatural. Most of the five percent we have left pristine is either too high or too dry to support much of anything.

So what does it matter? Are there consequences to turning so much land into the park-like settings humans enjoy? Absolutely. Both for biodiversity and for us. Our fellow creatures need food and shelter to survive and reproduce, and in too many places we have eliminated both. State natural heritage folks estimate that as many as thirty-three thousand species of plants and animals in this country are “imperiled.” Many of those that haven’t suffered local extinction are now too rare to perform their ecosystem role effectively. These can be considered functionally extinct.

The song birds that brighten spring mornings have been in decline since the nineteen sixties, having lost forty percent of their numbers. Birds that breed in meadows are in even more trouble. Once-common species such as the northern bobwhite, eastern meadowlark, field sparrow, and grasshopper sparrow have declined eighty-two, seventy-two, sixty-eight, and sixty-five percent, in total numbers, and are completely absent from many areas that used to support healthy populations. Evening grosbeaks have declined ninety percent in fifteen years because we are leveling their boreal forest breeding grounds to make junk mail. For most of us, hearing such numbers triggers a passing sadness, but few people feel personally threatened by the loss of biodiversity.

**Why We Need Biodiversity**
Here is why every one of us should feel threatened. Here is why it matters. Losses to biodiversity are a clear sign that our own life-support systems are failing. The ecosystems that support us — that determine the carrying capacity of our Earth and our local spaces — are run by biodiversity. It is biodiversity that generates oxygen and clean water, creates topsoil out of rock, buffers extreme weather events like droughts and floods, pollinates our crops, and recycles the mountains of garbage we create every day.

Now, with human-induced climate change threatening the planet, it is biodiversity that could suck that carbon out of the air and sequester it in living plants if given half a chance. It is plants that turn sunlight into all of the food that supports life on Earth, yet we continue to reduce complex forests into lawns the world over.

Humans cannot live as the only species on this planet because it is *other species* that create the ecosystem services essential to our survival. Every time we force a species to extinction we promote our own demise. Biodiversity is not optional.

**Parks Are Not Enough**
I am often asked why the habitats we have preserved within our park system are not enough to save most species from extinction. Research has shown that the area required to sustain biodiversity is pretty much the same as the area required to generate it in the first place. Put another way: Species are lost in the same proportion with which a habitat is reduced in size. The consequence of this simple relationship is profound. Since we have taken ninety-five percent of the United States from nature, we can expect to lose ninety-five percent of the species that once lived here, along with the services they have provided us.

The good news is that extinction takes a while, so if we start sharing our landscapes with other living things, we should be able to save much of the biodiversity that still exists.

**Start Locally: Redesigning Suburbia**
Scientific facts, deduced from thousands of studies about how energy moves through food webs, outline for us what it will take to give our local animals what they need to survive and reproduce on our properties: *Native plants*, and lots of them.
Plants are the source of all energy that supports life. In other words, all animals get their energy directly from plants, or by eating something that has already eaten a plant.

Some animals don’t eat plants directly. They must rely on other animals, which do eat plants, to transmit the energy.

The group of animals most responsible for passing energy from plants to the animals that don’t eat plants directly, is insects. This is what makes insects such vital components of healthy ecosystems. So many animals depend on insects for food (e.g., spiders, reptiles, amphibians, rodents, bats, and ninety-six percent of all terrestrial birds), that removing insects from an ecosystem spells its doom.

If you think back on our suburban landscaping history, getting rid of insects is exactly what we have tried to do. For over a century we have favored ornamental landscape plants from China and Europe over those that evolved right here. Among the reasons for favoring the imported plants has been the observation that they “are not subject to insect infestation.”

Research now tells us that not all plants are created equal. Every plant species protects its leaves with a species-specific mixture of chemicals. With few exceptions, only insect species that have shared a long evolutionary history with a particular plant lineage have developed the physiological adaptations required to digest the chemicals in their host’s leaves. Insects have specialized over time to eat only the plants carrying particular chemicals. When we present insects from Pennsylvania with plants that evolved on another continent, chances are those insects will be unable to digest them.

We used to think this was good. Avoid insect infestation by planting suggested species, and/or spray and kill all insects that do show up on our plants.

Now we know that an insect that cannot, for whatever reason, eat part of a leaf, cannot fulfill its role in the food web.

We have planted Kousa dogwood (Cornus kousa), a species from China that supports no insect herbivores, instead of our native flowering dogwood (Cornus florida) that supports one hundred and seventeen species of moths and butterflies alone. On hundreds of thousands of acres we have planted goldenraintree (Koelreuteria paniculata) from China, a tree that supports one caterpillar species, instead of a variety of our beautiful oaks, and we have lost the chance to grow five hundred and thirty-four species of caterpillars, all of them nutritious bird food. My own research has shown that native ornamentals support twenty-nine times more biodiversity than do alien ornamentals. Further, it’s unnerving to learn that eighty-two percent of the woody invaders in our country are escapes of the horticultural industry.

**Your Garden Has a Function**

In the past we have not designed gardens that play a critical ecological role in the landscape, but we must do so in the future. The importance of our doing this cannot be overstated. We need to quickly replace unnecessary lawn with densely planted woodlots in the East and West, and natural prairies in the Midwest; whatever can serve as habitat for our local biodiversity.

Homeowners can do this by planting the borders of their properties with plants native to their region: In the East, native trees such as white oaks (Quercus alba), black willows (Salix nigra), red maples (Acer rubrum), green ashes (Fraxinus pennsylvanica), black walnuts (Juglans nigra), river birches (Betula nigra) and shagbark hickories (Carya ovata), under-planted with woodies like serviceberry (Amelanchier canadensis), arrowwood (Viburnum dentatum), hazelnut (Corylus americanus), and blueberries (Vaccinium spp). Our studies have shown that even modest increases in the native plant cover on suburban properties significantly increases the number and species of breeding birds, including birds of conservation concern.

We have also recently demonstrated that homeowners needn’t worry that native insects will defoliate their gardens. A diversity of native plants will support a diversity of native insects that, in turn, support a healthy community of natural enemies that keeps them in check. One bluebird pair brings up to three hundred caterpillars back their nest every day. You will be hard-pressed to find any caterpillars in your yard if you create habitat for breeding birds. In a recent study, homeowners who planted natives exclusively found that only three percent of the leaves on their properties were damaged by insects.

As gardeners and stewards of our land, we have never been so empowered to help save biodiversity from extinction, and the need to do so has never been so great. All we need to do is plant native plants.

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**Can a corkscrew save the Earth?**

Of course not. But a Wild Ones Gift Membership might.

Having a hard time thinking up appropriate gift ideas during this time of economic uncertainty? Expensive corkscrews, fancy clothes, and gift certificates for that trendy coffee place down the street just don’t make the grade now. Why not give something fun that also shows how much you care about the future of our planet? Those crazy corkscrews usually get thrown into the back of a kitchen drawer, the fancy clothes might not fit in these days, and those gift certificates? Just not personal enough. But your gift of a Wild Ones membership might be the start of a journey that leads someone to saving the Earth, or at least a small part of it.

Can’t think of anyone who would enjoy a Wild Ones membership? At least one of your friends would love this gift. And how about those new neighbors down the street who aren’t sure what to do with their yard? Or maybe those relatives who keep borrowing your lawnmower. And don’t forget that local “weed inspector” who keeps eyeing your prairie? Better yet, just think what a Wild Ones membership will do for the kids at your neighborhood school.

Three levels of membership are available, and every recipient of a gift membership gets all the standard benefits of membership, including a subscription to the *Wild Ones Journal*. We’ll even send them a letter so they’ll know it’s from you.

Helping to save the Earth, and your favorite Wild organization, has never been so easy. The journey starts at www.for-wild.org/joining.html. Go there now.
Three distinctive shrubs are part of the visual landscape in our yard at Green Gables. One was selected primarily for its beauty and history. All were chosen to fulfill a function. When beauty and function are combined it is the essence of good planning and design.

**Staghorn sumac**
The selection of staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*), to replace a concrete patio located just outside and adjacent to our family/living room turned out to be a perfect solution for what I considered a major eyesore for one who likes to look out a window and see nature. When we first moved in, the primary view out the only window in the room, a large glass sliding door, other than a great expanse of lawn, was a twelve-foot by eighteen-foot squarish, grey slab of concrete edged by a two-foot wide linear planter for annuals, and outlined with decaying railroad ties. Not even a hint of anything natural.

The concrete and railroad ties were removed as soon as I could find a person with a jackhammer. After a year of construction repair work around the house, six staghorn sumac were planted along the south wall of the "lake room," so named since it faces Trippe Lake. Later, three large windows replaced the sliding door in order to provide a full view of the prairie garden, the lake, the trees and shrubs by the lake, wildlife roaming the yard, birds at the feeder, and people strolling on the paths.

Sumacs produce additional plants (clones) through sprouting from their expanding root systems. Over the years the original six five-foot tall plants have grown to twelve and fifteen feet in height. Some have died due to expanding shade, while new ones sprouted where sun became more available. Presently, there are eighteen mature and maturing plants, with sixteen young ones starting to fill in where needed. Viewed from outside the house, they look like one large shrub. They are not sheared into geometric shapes or prevented from intermingling with each other. Their distinctive, large compound leaves create an exotic impression of tropical forest plants. The artistic, sculptured branching habit, and the beautiful fall colors of oranges and reds are outstanding. The fuzzy, red clusters of seed are also showy, and provide food for early spring birds, especially robins.

As appealing as their beauty is, the main reason for selecting staghorn sumac was to provide filtered shade for the lake room during the hot humid days of summer. This they do admirably well. In fact, when the plants were only eight-feet to ten-feet tall it was necessary to selectively prune out some of the large leaves so that we could see the back yard. Now that the sumac clone has grown tall enough to leaf out above the level of the windows, pruning is only required for the younger plants, and the windows are shaded.

Its love for a sunny location makes it ideal for planting on the south side of a house where heat mitigation is often desirable. Because sumac leaves out late and drops leaves early, sun is allowed into the lake room not only during the extreme cold of winter, but also during the cool days of spring and fall. Its open branching habit allows pruning to permit one to see through from inside the house, yet its south-facing, large, shading leaves can provide visual privacy from the outside.

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**Green Gables**

An American landscape designed with nature in mind:

**Sumac & Raspberries**

By Richard J. Ehrenberg

Part 6 of a series.
The Wild Ones Yellow Pages listings give you a chance to get to know our Wild Ones business members. We want them to know we appreciate their support. When looking for products and services you need, remember that our Wild Ones business members, along with most of our Journal advertisers, share the goals and ideals of Wild Ones everywhere.

CALIFORNIA

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www.treeloifenursery.com
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Thirty years ago, we started on a path to promote regionally appropriate horticulture. Inspired by our natural surroundings, we simply provide the finest quality California native plants on the market. Staying true to our original vision, we grow plants for naturally sustainable landscapes, and we believe in creating spaces that look and feel authentically “California.” Our knowledgeable propagation, production, and sales crews make up a team (more like a family) of long-term experts that have developed and honed reliable, efficient methods for growing and delivering natives. By propagating over 500 species and varieties of native plants for the whole-nursery in the spring and fall, at farmer’s markets, rock garden shows, and the Wild Ones Yellow Pages, we have protected it with a permanent conservation easement. Our services include design, landscaping, evaluation, written conservation plans, and permits. You’ll conserve water and attract butterflies, songbirds, and beneficial insects to your yard. And you’ll experience all this from a customized design that puts you in the landscape, with walking trails, benches, patios, rain gardens, water features, and formal garden beds tailored to increase your personal enjoyment. We can help you with all phases of your landscape project, including ecological evaluation, written conservation plans, and permits. Call us today for a free site visit.

ILLINOIS

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(708) 785-2943
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www.artandlindaswildflowers.com
North Park Village Nature Center Chapter
In creating our gardens, we take our cues from the beautiful things and places we have seen in the natural world. The location – the earth – tells us what goes where. The conditions, such as the amount of sun or shade, the type of soil, the amount of moisture an area will get and retain, all dictate what types of plants will be happy, will thrive, and will coexist there. The native plants we use will all belong together there, as they have since ancient times to create a sense of harmony.

EarthWild Gardens
1479 Potawatomi Rd, Grayslake IL 60030-3531
(847) 287-8477
info@earthwildgardens.com
www.earthwildgardens.com
Lake-To-Prairie Chapter
EarthWild Gardens grew out of a love for gardening and a commitment to preserving local biodiversity. We sell over 150 species of hard-to-find native flowers, grasses, sedges, vines, shrubs, and trees. We help our clients incorporate native plants into their residential settings – in naturalized prairie landscapes, rain gardens, woodland settings, or formal cottage gardens. We are in north suburban Grayslake, now at Station Square of Prairie Crossing, right off of Ill. Rt. 137, north of where Harris and Casey Roads intersect.

Kickapoo Mud Creek Nature Conservancy
1919 Limelink Rd, PO Box 38
Oregon IL 61061-0038
(815) 973-0756
kentkathy@sbcglobal.net
www.kickapoomudcreek.org
Rock River Valley Chapter

Pizzo & Associates Ltd
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(815) 495-2300
jack@pizzo.info
www.pizzo.info
Rock River Valley Chapter
Pizzo & Associates Ltd of Leland, Illinois, is dedicated to the use of ecologically sound principals in planning and development for both public and private sectors. They bring together the disciplines of planning, consulting, contracting, stewardship, and nursery in one company for their public and private land owners who are committed to the restoration of natural processes on their land to create stable, cost-effective, and beautiful solutions to today’s problems.

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(815) 648-4888
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www.redbuffalonursery.com
Lake-To-Prairie Chapter
Red Buffalo Nursery specializes in plants native to the prairies, wetlands, savannas, and forests of northeastern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin. We grow plants from locally collected seed whenever possible. Plant sales occur at our nursery in the spring and fall, at farmer’s markets, and by appointment. Visit our web site for a plant list, sales dates, and locations. When you are here, be sure to visit our prairie and sedge meadow restoration. We are proud of our natural area, and have protected it with a permanent conservation easement. Our services include design, landscaping, and natural-areas restoration and management.

The Natural Garden Inc
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(630) 584-0150 ext. 231
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Greater DuPage Chapter
The Natural Garden is the grover of over 1,000 varieties of herbaceous plants. Our selection of northern Illinois natives is unmatched, and is complimented by a discerning collection of ornamental perennials, grasses, and herbs. Come visit our unique 25-acre nursery, complete with garden center and beautiful display beds.

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Trillium works throughout northeast Illinois and southeast Wisconsin, offering elegant design and exacting installation to help you create a landscape you can live in. Your Trillium landscape will mimic the natural beauty around you while resolving challenges such as runoff, invasive plants, and high maintenance. You’ll conserve water and attract butterflies, songbirds, and beneficial insects to your yard. And you’ll experience all this from a customized design that puts you in the landscape, with walking trails, benches, patios, rain gardens, water features, and formal garden beds tailored to increase your personal enjoyment. We can help you with all phases of your landscape project, including ecological evaluation, written conservation plans, and permits. Call us today for a free site visit.

INDIANA

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(574) 586-3400
lcooper@jfnew.com
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Gibson Woods Chapter
JFNew is an experienced full-service ecological services firm, providing sound solutions to clients for over 19 years. Our team of over 130 professionals provides a broad range of ecological consulting, restoration services and native plant materials. JFNew is headquartered in northern Indiana with regional

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Twin Cities Chapter

Out Back Nursery, a grower of Minnesota native plants for 25
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MISSOURI

Missouri Wildflowers Nursery
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(573) 496-3492
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www.missouriwildflowers.net
Mid-Missouri Chapter

We sell native Missouri perennials, both seeds and plants. Our plants are nursery propagated. Missouri is the genetic origin of the plants, so they are best adapted to states east of the Rockies. View our plants online or visit the nursery near Jefferson City.

Songbird Station
PO Box 157, Mexico MO 65635, (800) 256-2473
mel@songbirdstation.com
www.songbirdstation.com
Mid-Missouri Chapter

Songbird Station is Central Missouri’s original, largest and best wild bird and nature store. In addition to offering over 7,000 different wild bird and backyard nature feeders, baths, houses, books, gifts, and more, we are also in our new location offering a selection of the best Missouri natives for attracting hummingbirds, songbirds, and butterflies. We offer suggested planting plans for central Missouri as well as pre-packed baskets containing a combination of annuals and perennials that can be enjoyed for a season, and then planted in the fall.

NEBRASKA

Todd Valley Farms Inc
East Highway 92, PO Box 202,
Mead NE 68041-0202
(402) 624-6385
wayne@toddevallyfarms.com
www.toddevallyfarms.com
Partner-at-Large

Todd Valley Farms is a leading producer of low-water-use turfgrass. The farm owns exclusive rights to several turfgrass varieties, including three turf-type buffalo grass. Buffalo grass is the only turfgrass native to the United States and uses up to 75 percent less water than other types of turfgrass. Todd Valley Farms buffalo grass was developed as turfgrass, not a modified pasture grass. They are seedless vegetative reproduced all female plants so they require less mowing, have very low pollen ratings, and form a dense green turf. Establishment is by sod or accelerated growth plugs. Plugs are shipped via UPS to all states, and are quick and easy to install with minimal ground preparation. Buffalo grass creates a low maintenance landscape, and is the grass of choice for green buildings and green roofs.

PENNSYLVANIA

Edge of the Woods Native Plant Nursery LLC
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We are located in eastern Pennsylvania, and offer over 300 species of plants native to the mid-Atlantic and Northeast areas of the U.S. Our selection includes trees, shrubs, aquatics, perennials, ferns, and grasses. Services include educational programs, consultation, landscape design, and installation. We stress “right plant right place,” and work to help customers select the plants that will thrive in their landscapes. Native plants play an important role in our ecosystem, and we want to help you discover their beauty as well as their other benefits. Some of those benefits include attracting birds, butterflies, and wildlife, slowing water run-off, and reducing pesticide and fertilizer usage. All our plants are nursery propagated. We do not collect from the wild.

WISCONSIN

Agrecol Corp
2918 Agriculture Dr, Madison WI 53718-6770
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mary.dela Rosa@agrecol.com
www.agrecol.com
Madison Chapter

Agrecol Corporation combines the best principles of production agriculture with the science of ecology, producing high-quality native seed and plants. Agrecol is the largest grower of native plants and seed in the Midwest, growing more than 200 species of native wildflowers and grasses. New products include specialty erosion control, water management products available to national and international markets. Agrecol offers seed and live plants and installation for prairies, woods, lakes, and savanna plant communities, sales and installation of Envirolok vegetated retaining walls, environmental consulting, and resource management services, restoration design, detention, retention, and rainwater basins, stormwater management, polycrylic m$, Native certified weed-free mulch/straw, silt fence equipment, installation, and site monitoring and maintenance.

Crystal River Inn B&B
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CrystalRiverInn@charterinternet.com
www.crystalriver-inn.com

Central Wisconsin Chapter

Our 1853 farmstead on the Crystal River in the historic village of Rural exudes country charm on “Rustic Road 23,” four miles south of Waupaca, in central Wisconsin. As Wild Ones members, we are committed to making as gentle impact on the Earth as possible and to restore native plant communities and wildlife habitat on our eleven acres. We are “Travel Green Wisconsin” certified, and have just begun our work of prairie restoration and invasive removal on this former farm. The Inn features seven guest rooms with antique furnishings, a view of the river or woods, and a nook for reading or visiting, and the cabin has shared baths. Guest rooms have private baths and fireplaces. Two rooms also have a double whirlpool. All include a full breakfast with a “Southern touch,” featuring our homemade local wild grape and wild plum jelly. Our non-smoking environment has free high-speed wireless Internet, meeting space for small groups, and we’re open year-round. Our land has paths through fields and woods, and an outdoor, seven-circuit classical labyrinth, and seven monitored bluebird houses. The wide variety of habitat on our land and the area from tamarack swamps to hardwood uplands invites local wildlife like river otter, bald eagle, and Karner blue butterflies. The area offers many restaurants and recreation opportunities: biking, birding, boating, canoeing, walking, fishing, and state parks and charming small towns. A rural Wisconsin treasure.

Door Landscape
6329 State Highway 42, Egg Harbor WI 54209-9138
(920) 495-3138
Cliff@doorlandscape.com
www.doorlandscape.com
Door County Chapter

Door Landscape is a full-service native landscape company located in the heart of one of the most diverse eco-regions in the world. Our core values include the education of our employees and our clients on the value of sustainable design and maintenance. Door Landscape focuses on the creation of sustainable, well-planned gardens that reflect the plant communities in our region and our peninsula. Our nursery division currently propagates over 70 native Door County species for use in our clients’ gardens. From pre-construction plant surveys and site analysis through the design, installation, and continued care processes, we strive to exceed our client’s expectations.

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(262) 642-2651
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www.fieldsneighborhood.org
Milwaukee-Southwest/WIthr Chapter
Welcome to Fields Neighborhood, an innovative horticultural community nestled in the rolling hills of southern Wisconsin that combines sustainable living with a strong community atmosphere and respect for the natural environment. Fields Neighborhood offers a range of clustered homes that integrate the latest green building technologies with designs that minimize the impact on the natural surroundings. Discover homes built with concern for your comfort and for the environment. Fields Neighborhood offers certified Green Built Homes with quality craftsmanship and state-of-the-art environmental elements such as sun-tempered design, low-toxin, and recycled building materials, low-voc paints, real linoleum floors, and solid wood kitchen and bath cabinets. Enjoy the many recreation and community activities. Watch the sun rise over the nearby hills, canoe in the neighboring Honey Creek, swim in the nearby lake, listen to music on the town square or enjoy the annual 4th of July parade, hike on the many natural trails, ski at Alpine Valley, take part in gardening classes at Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, enjoy freshly baked organic bread and foods from Fields Best and the local organic farming community, and much more. Grow your spirit in Fields Neighborhood. Meet new friends at potlucks or seasonal festivals at next door’s Michael Fields. The Climbing Tree Waldorf-inspired Community and Daycare center in East Troy or Prairie Crossing Waldorf School just 30 minutes from the Fields Community offer quality, heart-centered education. Learn more about Fields Neighborhood by taking our online tour at www.fieldsneighborhood.org. Come live the life you’ve imagined at Fields Neighborhood.

Formecology LLC
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(608) 882-6656
info@formecology.com
www.formecology.com/

Madison Chapter

Formecology LLC is a full-service landscape architectural design, installation, and care firm focusing on environmentally beneficial and regionally inspired landscapes for residential and commercial settings. “Formecology” is born from the idea of combining art with nature; bringing natural elements together with cultural art forms. Our artful combinations of native vegetation, local stone, recycled materials, drought tolerant or no-mow turfgras, and rainwater-conscious features create unique land-
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Central Wisconsin Chapter
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**Johnson's Nursery Inc**
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Menomonie Falls WI 53051
Contact: Jackie Weisenberger
(262) 252-4988
daleink@jvlnet.com

www.johnsonsnursery.com

Menomonie River Valley Area Chapter
Johnson's Nursery, Inc. is one of the largest growers of landscape plants in southeast Wisconsin. Our locally grown inventory includes an extensive list of native trees, shrubs, and evergreens, along with herbaceous forbs, ferns, and grasses. We strive to provide our customers with the widest possible selection of balled and burlapped and container-grown plant material in the area. Our goal is to provide our customers with a wide variety of native plants , and we are continually propagating additional natives, many from local wild seed sources. Johnson's also offers residential and commercial landscape design, installation and maintenance services, including buckthorn and honeysuckle eradication. Our landscape architects and designers offer site-specific, creative ideas for your landscape. We also offer brick and stone patios, retaining walls, and other hardcape elements.

**Lacewing Gardening Services**

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lugeot@hotmail.com

Lake Shore Cleaners

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lakeshorecleaners@newbcrr.com

Fox Valley Area Chapter
At Lake Shore Cleaners we work closely with our clients to restore and create native and self-sustaining plant and animal habitats. A full-service company with the latest technology and equipment, we work with residential, commercial, and private land applications, handling all aspects to ensure the productivity and success of the site. At Native Solutions we take the guesswork out of ecological projects for prairies, savannas, wetlands and ponds, trees and shrubs. Helping to restore Wisconsin's native habitats.

**Landmark Landscapes Inc**

471 E Rhine St, Elkhart Lake WI 53020-1947
(920) 467-6442
joe@landmarklandscapesinc.com

www.landmarklandscapesinc.com

Sheboygan Area Tension Zone Chapter

Landmark Landscapes is an ecological landscape firm that promotes sustainable landscape applications and native plant communities. We host an expert staff of designers, horticulturists, arborists, and artisans who specialize in native landscape design, ecologically sensitive installation and low-impact maintenance practices. Our innovative approach toward landscaping ensures that each project meets our clients' needs, and benefits the environment. We have enthusiastically accepted a position of land stewardship, and will continue to help protect and restore the delicate ecosystems and biodiversity of the Upper Midwest. Call us for a consultation.

**Landscape Restoration**

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608-302-5744
daleink@jvlnet.com

Partner at Large

Landscape restoration is a small, experienced, value-based, natural area planting and management company. We're professionally certified (5-390 burn boss, WH herbicide applicator) and fully insured. And we're doing what we believe in: promoting native plants, and battling invasive species to help you manage your property for natural diversity with common-sense economics. Our work includes building native stone walls, establishing native plantings in flower, prairie and residential sites, building perennial gardens, and maintaining native prairie and CRP fields, rescuing native plants, planting prairie roadsides and steep berms, controlling garlic mustard, and battling buckthorn in woodlands, and都可以

**Lake Shore Cleaners**

Lake Shore Cleaners Inc

6423 N Richmond St, Appleton WI 54913-9627
(920) 716-1373
lakeshorecleaners@newbcrr.com

Fox Valley Area Chapter
At Lake Shore Cleaners we work closely with our clients to restore and create native and self-sustaining plant and animal habitats. A full-service company with the latest technology and equipment, we work with residential, commercial, and private land applications, handling all aspects to ensure the productivity and success of the site. At Native Solutions we take the guesswork out of ecological projects for prairies, savannas, wetlands and ponds, trees and shrubs. Helping to restore Wisconsin's native habitats.

**Landscape Restoration**

8221 W Front St, PO Box 418, Hanover WI, 53542
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daleink@jvlnet.com

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Landscape restoration is a small, experienced, value-based, natural area planting and management company. We're professionally certified (5-390 burn boss, WH herbicide applicator) and fully insured. And we're doing what we believe in: promoting native plants, and battling invasive species to help you manage your property for natural diversity with common-sense economics. Our work includes building native stone walls, establishing native plantings in flower, prairie and residential sites, building perennial gardens, and maintaining native prairie and CRP fields, rescuing native plants, planting prairie roadsides and steep berms, controlling garlic mustard, and battling buckthorn in woodlands, and attacking Canada thistle, crown vetch, multiflora rose, and gypsy moth infestations. Every year we donate a rain garden through the Wisconsin Rivers fall online auction (it's a tax-deductible landscape addition for a good cause), and in 2009 we are offering discounts for Wild Ones members in southern Wisconsin. If you would like a little help bringing nature back into balance on your property, give us a call for a free evaluation and proposal.

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marshall@centurytel.net

Fox Valley Area Chapter

The largest wholesale aquatic nursery in the Midwest, Marshall Transplant Aquatic Nursery produces quality native plant materials for large scale wetland mitigation and native restorations. We also provide installation services for a variety of projects including habitat restoration, waste water treatment, erosion control, bioengineering, and mine reclamation. Specialty services include mowing/maintenance, prescribed burning, no till drilling and delineation, mitigation, and monitoring. Join us in rebuilding our environment. We sell only to wholesale firms, contractors, ecologists, professional organizations and nurseries.

**National Railroad Museum**

2285 S Broadway Ave, Green Bay WI 54304
(920) 437-7623 ext 17
metelzrow@nationalrrmuseum.org

www.nationalrrmuseum.org

Green Bay Chapter

The origin of the National Railroad Museum dates to 1956, when local individuals advanced the concept of a national museum dedicated to the American railroad experience. Since then, the museum has operated as a privately funded 501c(3) educational organization with a mission to foster an understanding of railroading and its significance to American life. What began as an effort to acquire a single steam locomotive for a city park has grown into one of the largest rail museums in the nation. It now serves over 75,000 visitors annually. Today, a professional staff of 12, and over 100 volunteers welcome visitors from all over the world.

**NES Ecological Services**

4664 Golden Pond Park Ct, Oneida WI 54155-9292
(920) 499-5789
jhavel@releeinc.com

www.releeinc.com

Green Bay Chapter

NES Ecological Services is a committed group of scientists whose diverse backgrounds include restoration ecology, wildlife management, and wetland ecology. Located in Green Bay, Wisconsin, NES is fully equipped to serve clients throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest. Since 1996, we have provided native habitat restoration services to municipalities, lake management districts and associations, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and individual landowners. These services include planning and design, material installation, monitoring, and maintenance. NES ecologists use their knowledge and experience with Wisconsin's native community types to design and implement aesthetically pleasing, natural landscapes utilizing only plant species native to the site's region. The use of locally native species is a very important factor that is often overlooked, but is important in not only assuring a project's success, but also in meeting all the objectives of a restoration. Each restoration project is catered to the individual or group based upon their needs, experience, and willingness to be involved with the "hands-on" portion of the project. Visit our web site to review a few of our most recent projects along with a complete list of all the services we offer.

**Northern Native Plantscapes**

25350 S Garden Ave, Cable WI 54821
(715) 794-2548
florabee@hotmail.com

Partner-at-Large

Northern Native Plantscapes specializes in shoreline and woodland restoration, stormwater management or rain gardens, new home construction landscaping and perennial beds using native plants. Northern Native Plantscapes offers consultation, design, installation, and maintenance services. Turning a lake owner's shoreline from pure green lawn to a buffer of native plants not only helps wildlife, but also benefits the owner by protecting a privacy and noise buffer. Our goal is to create an ecologically healthy landscape while meeting the needs of the home owners.

Wild Ones Business Members Yellow Pages 2009
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www.northernsunset.com
Menomonee River Area Chapter
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oneplus@chorus.net
www.oneplusarchitecture.com
Madison Chapter
ONE Plus Architecture provides sustainable architectural design services for commercial, residential, and institutional clients. As our logo suggests, there is No Excuse for not taking care of the Earth – together we can and will make a difference in that effort. Our commitment to the Wild Ones, both personally and professionally, is only part of our devotion to that endeavor. ONE Plus design services include renovation, rehabilitation, and adaptation of existing buildings, daylighting, passive solar, and energy-efficient new building design.

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(920) 731-9781 ext 201
jlincoln@outagamiehousing.us
www.outagamiehousing.us
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Prairie Nursery
PO Box 306, Dept WO, Westfield WI 53964-0306
(800) 476-9453
ndiboll@prairienursery.com
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Taylor Creek Nurseries - Applied Ecological Services
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Toll-Free 877-394-9453 • www.for-wild.org
Planting a natural, native landscape doesn’t necessarily include every plant that can be found growing somewhere in the good old USA. Grow locally native plants.

As for the fear of staghorn sumac getting out of control and taking over one’s yard, put that notion aside. Yes, in a natural setting these shrubs will keep spreading and will grow into large masses. In so doing they shade out grasses and prairie plants to provide a protective habitat for forest trees to sprout and evolve. That is part of their function in the natural world. However, if one plans to do even a minimal amount of yard maintenance, sumac is very easy to control. Tender green shoots appear annually in my crushed stone path and are pinched off with fingers, on my way to the garage. Shoots sprout in the small lawn area east of the house and are cut off weekly by the lawnmower. Shoots sprout in the prairie garden and are allowed to grow the first season. Their three-foot to four-foot growth during their first season provides bright fall color to the prairie garden. The single stems are also allowed to remain through winter for added interest, and are cut off at the ground in spring. New shoots will provide color for the coming year.

Prairie rose
One prairie rose (Rosa setigera) was planted in a corner where the path from the lake intersects with the path to the garage. As a specimen shrub it acts as an obstacle both visually, lending mystery to the destination of the path, and functionally, against would-be shortcuts. The size of this rose is grand – eight feet tall by eighteen feet wide. Its hundreds of blooms with single pink petals and yellow centers are at their peak on July 4th to help celebrate American Independence Day; quite appropriate for a Midwestern native.

Unfortunately, the first old-fashioned hard winter of 2007-2008, since planting the prairie rose in 1996, caused severe dieback – we’ll see how much it recovers. This illustrates what is meant by “locally native plants.” The prairie rose is native in the Midwest, as far north as Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. During the ten previous years of mild winters here in southeastern Wisconsin, the rose suffered no winter kill. Planting a natural, native landscape doesn’t necessarily include every plant that can be found growing somewhere in the good old USA.

Black raspberry
A black raspberry patch (Rubus occidentalis), at Green Gables not only represents one of the prolific native plants still found in the countryside, it also is an edible delight that represents the rhythms of nature’s cycles. Late June and early July has us going for a walk to the lake in order to enjoy a handful of fresh black raspberries, which we planted along the path for easy access. A special Wisconsin author, Barbara Fitz Vroman, who writes about human experiences, made me aware that eating raspberries from one’s back yard is more than just the enjoyment of food, “you are tasting summer, childhood, family continuity,” and I would like to add, in our own native landscape we are also tasting “history.” Kim and I actually experience what Native Americans tasted and how they would have gathered this ephemeral fruit as they walked through a savanna.

The patch, which is approximately fifteen feet by forty feet, started with three volunteers (probably bird-planted) which over time spread quickly. Their six-foot canes arch over, and when the tips touch soil, roots and a new plant sprouts. Their ability to thrive on dry or moist soil and in full sun or partial shade makes them easy to place almost anywhere.

Here are three versatile, (one edible), native plants which could be included in most any landscape, yet they are not usually available in or promoted by garden centers.

We can do our part to promote these beauties by planting them, and sharing our extra ones with friends and neighbors when our patches grow too large.
Moving on, I continue the circuit of my yard, encountering a myriad of elm branches brought down by the ice. I notice that the bark of the fallen twigs has been nibbled by hungry cottontail rabbits. The windfall of tender branches is a winter boon for them, all the more reason for me to defer “clean up” of the yard until next spring. Looking closely at a smooth twig, I find more rosette lichen. It has snowed and thawed since the ice storm, and melting snow has moistened this specimen, turning it green. The colors in lichens are due to pigments in the fungal partner that likely protect the organism against intense sunlight. These colors, varying characteristically among species from dull grays to bright reds and yellows, are normally expressed when the lichen is dry. When wet, all lichens turn green. This is because water makes the fungal pigments translucent, allowing sunlight to reach the algal partner, and allowing the green color of the alga (chlorophyll) to emit outward. The lichen becomes photosynthetically active only when moisture is ample, an adaptation to the dry habitats in which they are often found.

Next to the foliaceous rosette lichen I find a crustose comma lichen (*Arthonia dispersa*). Instead of clinging to the surface of the bark like a foliaceous lichen, its thallus has invaded the bark just below its surface, creating a whitish stain on the twig. Peering closer with my lens, I perceive tiny black squiggles protruding slightly above the bark surface within the white stain – these are the apothecia of the comma lichen, giving rise to its name. Farther down the branch, I spot a second crustose lichen whose apothecia are stretched into wavy lines resembling hieroglyphics – script lichen (*Graphis scripta*), a common but easily overlooked inhabitant of tree bark. Continuing my walk around the yard, I find a third and fourth crustose species on exposed, sunny substrates. Bright orange splotches of orange-dust firedot lichen (*Caloplaca microphyllina*) adorn the wooden fenceposts separating my yard from the neighboring alfalfa field and the sparse yellowish crust of sidewalk firedot lichen (*Caloplaca feracissima*) gleams faintly on a pile of broken concrete. This pile was placed here on the edge of my prairie planting during the installation of a modern foundation in my one hundred-year-old farmhouse. Although my original intent for the concrete pile was to store it here temporarily (prior to eventual disposal as “junk”), the discovery of lichens here prompts me to wonder about its positive, permanent role as a habitat for rock-dwelling species (a “lichenarium,” if you will).

I have not yet found a fruticose lichen in my yard, but I have seen them in many other places. One of my favorites is gray reindeer lichen (*Cladina rangiferina*), whose blue-gray mounds of intricately branched fruiting bodies (podetia) are an eye-catching treat when I encounter them on the ground of small openings in dry oak forests, often inhabiting thin soil rimming a rocky ravine. A colleague recently found a robust population growing on the acidic, barren substrate of an old strip mine within the city limits of Des Moines, Iowa. Its natural range extends southward from tundra-and-taiga habitats in northern Canada (where it is eaten by caribou, our North American “reindeer”) all the way to the Midwest. Other favorites of mine include gold-eye lichen (*Teloschistes chrysophthalmus*), whose stubby orange podetia I have found growing stoutly upright on tree branches in dry woodlands in the Loess Hills of western Iowa, and old man’s beard (*Usnea*), whose stringy, yellowish-green thallus clings pendently to rocky cliffs above Lake Superior in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Lichens are a beautiful and diverse part of our natural world. They are all around us, but are often overlooked because of their small size. Many species survive quite well in human-affected habitats. In fact, many common species such as hooded sunburst lichen (*Xanthoria fallax*), candle-flame lichen (*Candelaria concolor*), and star rosette lichen (*Physcia stellaris*) thrive in the savanna-like structure of rural farmsteads. I’ll bet that the doorsteps of most readers are within fifty paces of these species. Lichens show up in surprising places in rural, suburban, and even urban environments: Trees, rock piles, old wood, brick walls, and fenceposts – even on the metal surfaces of long-abandoned cars, trucks, and tractors.

We heat our country home with wood, and I often get distracted by lichens I spot on the bark of logs I am about to load into the stove. Unlike wildflowers, you don’t need to wait until spring for them to show up – they are always present and ready to be found by an interested observer, even in winter.

Naturalist landowners can play a role in lichen conservation. First, by becoming familiar with the beauty and diversity of lichens, you will almost certainly be as motivated to preserve them as you likely already are for native wildflowers, grasses, sedges, and trees. (A beautiful, if expensive, $110 guide to help you become familiar with lichens is *The Lichens of North America*, by Irwin Brodo, Stephen Sharnoff, and Sylvia Sharnoff – Yale University Press, 2001). Second, recognize and protect the lichen habitats on your property. (“Does that rock pile have any *Caloplaca* on it? Is *Cladonia* living on those rotting planks?”)

As I finish walking around my house, I marvel that I lived here for twenty years before becoming aware of the biodiversity living literally in my own backyard. I know I will be spending more time peering through my hand lens at bark, rocks, and soil – because I have discovered a “likin’” for a previously overlooked part of the natural world.

Orange patterns of orange-dust firedot lichen (*Caloplaca microphyllina*) nearly cover this wooden fencepost.
What’s Wild on the Web Site

Wild Ones on YouTube
Some new things on the Wild Ones web site include new videos on YouTube. To take a look, go to the Wild Ones YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/user/WildOnesNPNL. Click in the center of the large video on the page to watch a slideshow presentation of our WILD Center in Neenah, Wisconsin. Or click on any of our other videos listed in the “Videos” section. You can also scroll down the page a bit and click on any of the videos in the “Favorites” section to see Wild Ones-related videos produced by other people and organizations.

The most recent addition is a televised interview with Wild Ones Executive Director, Donna VanBuecken, titled “It’s Your Environment.” And don’t forget to click the “Subscribe” button so you will be notified by e-mail any time we add something new.

Wild Ones Amazon Associate Bookstore
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GoodSearch
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Chapters, please send your chapter contact information to:
Meeting Place Coordinator Mary Paquette
N2026 Cedar Road • Adell, Wisconsin 53001
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Chapter ID numbers are listed after names.

Meet us online at www.for-wild.org/calendar.html

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For meeting and activity information, call the chapter contact person or check the chapter web site.
Washington School in Marshfield, Wisconsin, began their outdoor classroom garden project in the fall of 2005, with the intention of using native plants for soil, water, and habitat conservation. With a rain garden project in mind, third grade students visited a local prairie and gathered seeds. The seeds were sown in flats in the spring and planted in fall when Washington School opened its doors at a new location. Wild Ones members served as advisors to the school team. Plots were established for each grade level at the school to study plant care, life cycles, plant needs, and reproduction. Upper level students look at hydrologic cycle, endangered plant species, weathering, and erosion. The school’s project “Seeds for Tomorrow” was awarded a Seeds for Education grant for three hundred and fifty dollars by Wild Ones in 2006. Currently their three-year-old prairie garden is thriving. The students and teachers have found many uses for this outdoor classroom. Students have used language arts to write about their gardens. Math students are using the skills of estimating, measuring, charting, and graphing. Art students are designing and creating a mural in the school lobby, using their drawings and paintings of native plants. All students are seeing firsthand what Wisconsin looked like in its pre-European-settlement past.

Washington School Prairie Is Growing New Generations
By Joan Rudolph

Art students practiced their skills drawing and painting the native plants.

Using a cardboard template, Washington School students appropriately spaced their plantings within the garden.

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