

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



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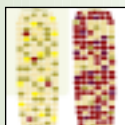
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Thank you. Back cover.



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



Gerould Wilhelm (L)
co-author of *Plants
of the Chicago
Region*, and Floyd
Swink (R), were both
on staff at the
Morton Arboretum
when the book was
written. This photo
was taken by Jim
Nachel who was the
Morton Arboretum
photographer at the
time. Linda Masters,
a student of Swink's,
sent in this photo
from her collection.

Plants of the Chicago Region: A Brief History and Appraisal

By Bill McKnight, Publications Chairman, Indiana Academy of Science

In botanical tradition "floras" are books that contain comprehensive treatments of the plants of a particular region; they may also carry diagnostic, dichotomous keys. The area that a flora covers can be a natural geographical unit (like an island) but is usually politically defined. Floras usually require some specialized botanical knowledge to use with any effectiveness.

This flora of the Chicago region has long been a popular reference for ecologists and plantmen in general, people from other parts of the country who are in a position of needing to reconstruct a native-plant community from scratch, and find plants native to their area listed in *Plants of the Chicago Region*. Unorthodox as this may seem, quite simply, there are no other books available that list plant associates to the extent that Swink and Wilhelm do. A plantsman using this book in this manner needs to keep in mind that rigid and specific acceptance of the lists is not ecologically wise. Plant associates are mostly characteristic of specific regions – the information is often not readily transferrable. Species may occur from Michigan to Alaska – but their associates in each region are necessarily quite different. Using the book for ideas and suggestions, however, can go a long way. – *Editor*

Once upon a time The Morton Arboretum was the home of three giants: Ray Schulenberg, Floyd Swink, and Gerould Wilhelm. No institution in Illinois, and few, if any, in the country, could boast of such an elite trio of contemporaneous plantmen. Sadly, time and an inexplicable administrative decision changed that. Swink and Schulenberg, two kind and brilliant botanists, are no longer with us. Floyd died in 2000, while Ray (a pioneer in prairie restoration) went to the great grassland in the sky three years later. Wilhelm currently is the principal botanist and research consultant for Conservation Research Institute, in Elmhurst, Illinois. Fortunately, for those interested in plants and the native landscape, their many years of collaboration produced fruit. So, while the team is no more, their marvelous creation, *Plants of the Chicago Region (PCR)* lives on. This "bible," as some refer to it, encompasses twenty-two counties at the southern tip of Lake Michigan and parts of four states.

Four editions of this unique botanical encyclopedia have been published. The first edition was issued in 1969, and revised and expanded editions were released in 1974 and 1979. By the late nineteen-eighties individuals and organizations were desperate for an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Reaching the Next Generation



For Mother's Day this year my kindergartners presented me with sunflower seedlings they had planted at school, proudly explaining how it's a good idea to plant two seeds in each cup in case one doesn't "worminate." I also got an eight-inch diameter ceramic coffee cup filled with annuals for my desk (which, if you know me, you'd appreciate is better than allowing me that much coffee). In spring they whooped and yelled for me to "Hurry Mom! Come see!!!" each time they found a plant sprouting, or saw a new flower.

There is nothing quite like sharing your garden with a child to rekindle your sense of awe and add excitement. Have you found a chance lately to share your love of gardening with a child? If not, invite some over. Give them a trowel, a magnifying glass, a bug net, or just let their senses run wild. Ask what they see. Look *really* close – at a flower, a freshly-dug root, a caterpillar. What do they smell? What do they hear? Talk about what good comes of this garden, be it a native plant landscape or a vegetable patch.

Wild Ones' core mission is to educate. I'm all in favor of life-long learning, but to reach our future vision of seeing native plants become commonplace in man-made landscapes as well as taking on new roles (like pollinator support for agriculture), it is critical that today's children learn *now* what a native plant is and what it can do.

There are a number of existing Wild Ones programs that promote youth education. These include the very popular Seeds for

Education (SFE) grant programs, conducted at the National level, as well as by some chapters. Which reminds me to say *thanks!* to everyone who donated to SFE in response to our 2008 annual appeal. The SFE Committee, under the chairmanship of Steve Maassen, created the Tapestry of Learning program and video, along with the PLUMES program (for-wild.org/seededuc.html for full details). The *Wild Ones Journal* and the Wild Ones web site (for-wild.org) share the "Next Generation" articles, and we support the No Child Left Inside initiative. Some members also provide their expertise to projects at local schools and nature centers.

What else should we do? How can we be sure to reach kids – from the farm to the inner city? Such are the questions to be tackled by a re-invented SFE Committee, hereafter known as the Wild Ones National Youth Education Committee, renamed with the goal of thinking beyond the grant program. If you have suggestions to pass along, or would like to learn more about the committee, be sure to let us know.

I didn't know what a native plant was until I was thirty-five. I saw today that the kids next door have an educational comic book about native plants (put out by the New England Wildflower Society and others). Will the next Wild Ones publication be "Where's Waldo? Lost in a Tall-Grass Prairie?" ★

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.

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What's Coming Up?

Wild Ones Annual Meeting, marking our thirtieth anniversary, will be held in conjunction with the Milwaukee Chapters' **Natural Landscaping Seminar**, held at Cardinal Stritch College, on **October 17, 2009**.

Third Quarterly Board Meeting will be hosted by the Flint (MI) Chapter on **August 1, 2009**.

Fourth Quarterly Board Meeting will be hosted by the Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter on **October 16, 2009**, at the Mequon Nature Center, in Mequon, Wisconsin.

Third National Strategic Planning Meeting will be held during the evening of **October 17, 2009**, at the Mequon Nature Center, in Mequon, Wisconsin.

30 Years of Wild Ones

A Wild One Natural Landscaping Seminar in conjunction with the Wild Ones Annual Meeting

Cardinal Stritch University/Milwaukee

October 17, 2009

Registration from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

Sessions run from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Contact: www.for-wild.org

414.299.9888 x3

\$25 in advance. \$15 student in advance.

\$30 at the door. No credit cards, please.

Registration brochures will be available later this summer, and online registration will be available through the Wild Ones web site, for-wild.org.

Bring a bag lunch, and plan to attend the **Wild Ones Annual Meeting**, held during the lunch break.

Lunch is also available in the university cafeteria and at local restaurants nearby. Bring your own coffee mug to cut down on waste with disposables.

Vendors will be present.



**Annah
Roeselet**

Our Yard: The process of planning and creating our native planting.

Wendy Walcott

Starting Your Own: How to propagate native plants from seed or by division.

Nancy Aten

Still Learning After 20 Years: Gardens of patience, lessons, surprises, and joy.

Randy Powers

Plants, Pollinators, People: Making the connection.

Luann Thompson

A Wild Journey:
1981 - 2009.

John Harrington

The Missing Link: Transitioning from canopy to ground.

Joy Buslaff

Getting started and making time work for you.

Kelly Kearns

Update on Invasive Plant Issues in Wisconsin.

ANNIVERSARIES

Wild Ones Chapter Anniversaries

5 Years

Habitat Gardening in Central New York (NY) Chapter
Lake Woods (WI) Chapter

Western Reserve (OH) Chapter

Wolf River (WI) Chapter

10 Years

Flint (MI) Chapter
Oakland (MI) Chapter

15 Years

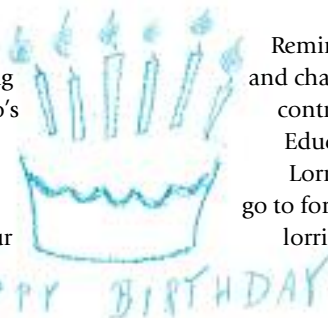
Columbus (OH) Chapter
Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter

30 Years

Milwaukee-North (WI) Chapter

Lorrie Otto's Birthday

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 90 years old. Please send your gifts by September 5th so we can get your cards and letters to her in time for her birthday.



Remind your fellow members and chapter boards to send their contributions to the Seeds for Education Grant Program, in Lorrie's honor. Also, you can go to for-wild.org/download/bd/lorriebirthday.html to contribute and to download a special birthday card.

Art Beyond Pictures

Julie's Berms

Story and photo by Ney Fraser

Introduction by Donna VanBuecken. From 1979 to 1983, the camaraderie of the nine original Wild Ones members grew to sixty-five members. In 1988, President Rae Sweet printed a four-page newsletter titled *The Outside Story*. There were two issues printed that year and the next. In 1990 we increased to six issues a year. From these humble beginnings, the more formal idea of a natural landscaping organization was nurtured, until 1990 when Wild Ones became a legally recognized Wisconsin corporation with 501(a) state tax-exempt status, and later in 1995, with 501(c)3 national tax-exempt status as a national not-for-profit environmental educational organization.

This year we are celebrating thirty years of educational efforts which started at a time when people were not thinking in terms of alternatives to lawns. Lorrie Otto, the woman on whose principles Wild Ones was founded, and her cohorts had just successfully worked with Congress to ban the use of DDT.

People were still of the mind that we should be controlling nature. Books, chemicals and machinery – all were produced to do that very thing. But these nine people, who were so intensely interested in the concept of native plants as an alternative to lawns, were determined to learn as much as they could about how to go about doing so.

With the help of Lorrie's expertise, they began developing a sensitivity to land use in harmony with plants and animals. There were few books to refer to for information, and certainly fewer native plants available for sale. Lorrie organized yard tours to help people visualize their natural gardens, arranged for digs on private property by owners' invitation to develop a plant base, located restoration sites and native remnants for future seed gathering in the fall, and brought in speakers to begin an educational process about it all.

These nine people initiated what became the Wild Ones natural landscaping restoration movement back in the seventies, when little was known of the need for this movement. They went about putting together the information that was so vital to get their membership educated. Today, there are many resources available, including the omnipresent Internet, which makes developing a world in harmony with nature more easily achievable.

Ney Tait Fraser's story, starting on this page, is just one snippet of history that describes how these early Wild Ones members dedicated their efforts toward achieving Lorrie's goals of healing the Earth.

For several years Julie Marks had lived in a house on Brown Deer Road in Milwaukee.

The loud noise of traffic going by was so disconcerting that she decided to construct berms between her house and Brown Deer Road. At that time, Cardinal Stritch University was being expanded. Solid, thick clay – the kind you spin on a potter's wheel – was being dug for the foundations. Big truckloads of it were being hauled out. Julie asked one of the drivers where he was taking the clay. It was a fair distance away, so she told him he was welcome to dump the clay on her lawn. Truck after truck brought clay, making two enormous piles of thick, wet lumps. Finally Julie told the truck drivers, "That's enough. You can stop now." People driving past the mountains of clay wondered what Julie planned to do with them.

In 1988, Julie was Membership Chair of Wild Ones. There were probably only two dozen local members, if that – a grand total of sixty in all – no chapters. She was determined to have at least fifty local members by the time she left office. Julie was a popular woman, possessing wit and charm. She ran the polling booth at Bayside, and was the greeter at her temple.

It took her a whole year to find someone who would shape those two great piles of clay into berms, because the job was too small for a large company, and too large for a small one. Finally, Robert Greaves, the husband of one of the two dozen local Wild Ones members came to her aid. Together they shaped the piles of clay into what looked like two overlapping sleeping animals. The berms have the most wonderful forms in the winter time when nothing is growing on them. After they were shaped, Julie bought seeds from Robert Ahrenhoerster of Prairie Seed Source, and seeded the berms in the fall of that year. In the twenty years since, the piles of clay have settled, but are still of considerable size, acting as a sound barrier. The noise of cars coming from one side and zipping past is absorbed by the berms, which really do reduce noise pollution on the south of the house.

At this time Julie was having trouble with pain in her legs. Her doctor x-rayed her back, and found little shadows all the way up her spine, which were diagnosed as cancer. She lost interest in the berms. The spring of 1989 was cool and wet. Invasive weed seeds brought in with the clay germinated. On the other hand, the prairie seeds



Julie had sown the previous fall needed the warmth of the Earth in order to germinate. By the time they had awakened, there was so much shade from the weed seedlings that very few of the native plants survived.

In the middle of that summer Lorrie Otto and her friend Jan Hoy were driving by and decided to do something about the unsightly appearance of the berms, which were not a good advertisement for Wild Ones. Jan was a wonderful helpmate for Lorrie, working with her on the plantings at Indian Hills School and at Bayside School. Together they decided to pull out the plants which were not native. This took all day, and they didn't finish until dark.

After her diagnosis, Julie was quite ill. She came out and offered to pay Lorrie, who refused payment, thinking of the enormous medical bills Julie must have been dealing with. A chat with Rae Sweet, who was president of Wild Ones at the time and a close friend of Julie's, revealed that Julie did not have any financial problems. So Lorrie went back to Julie saying,

"Let's do this the way you want it done. We shall put mature plants in the berms, and have Donald Vorpahl (a landscape designer, now retired, and long-time member of Wild Ones) help you make a plan, using the plants you choose. Decide what you want and order the plants from the five existing native plant nurseries."

Julie sat in a wheelchair, directing Vorpahl, who had made large maps of the berms. "I would like to have shooting stars on that berm right there, and then columbines. Don't you think prairie smoke would be good along the top?" Together they designed the berms with all the plants Julie wanted to see as she sat in her house, and for people to see as they drove by on Brown Deer Road.

On the last day of October, in 1989, Wild Ones gathered in the Marks garage, where Vorpahl unfolded exquisitely detailed maps indicating the locations of plants on the berms. Dormant plants were in plastic packages, labeled with numbers that corresponded to ones on the map –

and others on tongue depressors stuck in the ground on the berms. This arrangement made it simple to plant the roots in their correct place.

Dormant plants were put directly on the clay and covered with a five-inch-deep layer of leaf mulch, which is rich in nutrients, holds water, and protects plants. In those days the Village of Bayside had a huge pile of lawn clippings and leaf mulch near the railroad tracks, just over the road from the berms. Residents could help themselves to the compost, which was free of charge. Now, there is a police station in that area. The leaf dump is sorely missed by residents who used it to nourish their gardens.

Friends of Julie's as well as volunteers from Wild Ones offered to help with the berms. Some of them had never planted dormant prairie plants before. Irises went in upside down, holes were dug too deep, but all in all it was most successful. The following September, 1990, the berms were aglow with the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

The Blind Faith Hotel

Book review by Barb Bray: *The Blind Faith Hotel*, by Pamela Todd.

Life is falling apart for fourteen-year-old Zoe McKenna, her older sister, and younger brother. They say good-bye to their father as he boards an Alaskan fishing boat for the season, knowing that they won't be there when he returns. Their mother packs them into their old red Subaru station wagon and drives from Washington state to the Midwest where she grew up as a child.

Zoe's mother had inherited her parents' house, but it's a sorry sight. Zoe describes it as a "shipwreck of a house" no one cares about. While her mom could see a bright future for their new home, Zoe sees only peeling paint and rotten wood. Angry about leaving her father, Zoe says to her mother, "I don't see how you can be so happy when everything is falling apart."

In the midst of all this change, Zoe feels alone and adrift. Her mother is busy with contractors, reconstructing the old house, and her seventeen-year-old sister barely hears what she says. When she tries to ask them about a personal problem, they ignore her. Zoe then goes to a friend from school, and the two of them concoct a foolish idea with unintended consequences. As a result, Zoe ends up arrested for stealing, and is sentenced to community service. Zoe's mother tries to comfort her, but Zoe is hurting too much inside.

Zoe spends the summer working at the Mesquakie Prairie Nature Conservancy. Hub, a man old enough to be her grandfather, puts her to work cutting buckthorn and pulling Canada thistle from the prairie. She has some pretty interesting reactions to the work. At one point she says, "Maybe an anklet bracelet wouldn't have been so bad."

Hub teaches her about the plants and animals, but more importantly he teaches her to have faith in things, and to not give up. He tells her that to save something, you need to love it.

While working in the prairie she spies a boy her age, who is also troubled. He is wild, carefree, and in some ways like a part of nature. She ends up sharing her thoughts



Juvenile Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), found in Washington, DC. Photo by Steve Hersey.

with him, and also a wonderful experience watching a nest of Cooper's hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*). In the end, Zoe finally feels that she belongs somewhere, and that place is home.

Pamela Todd, the author of *The Blind Faith Hotel*, has done a wonderful job of

incorporating nature into this coming-of-age tale of a young girl. Her descriptions of the prairie take you there so you can almost see flowers blooming like an explosion of fireworks, and smell the citrus scent of New Jersey tea, or the minty leaves of bergamot.

Even though it's been many years since I have read a teen novel like this, I found the writing engaging, and the characters interesting. I cared about what happened to Zoe and her family. I also enjoyed the relationship that developed between Zoe and the Cooper's hawks as they nested and cared for their babies.

This book was a good read, but I recommend it only for children over the age of twelve, as listed on the book's jacket cover. The content would not be appropriate for younger kids. One more recommendation – girls probably will enjoy this book more than boys, since it deals with a teenage girl's feelings. ★



Chapter Notes

Jeanne Rose, President of the **Central UP (MI) Chapter** says, "The head of the biology department at Bay de Noc Community College is a member of our chapter and a strong proponent of native plantings and eradication of invasives. For the past several years we have assisted him in planting native seeds and transplanting seedlings for the college annual plant sale. The college is the only local source of native plant material, so this is a win-win for both of us."

Central Wisconsin (WI) Chapter President, **Dan Dieterich** says, "We cooperated with the Stevens Point City Forester in preparing and planning an area adjacent to our Green Circle Bike Trail. The area, near McDill Pond on the Plover River, is now seeded to native grasses and flowers."

Diane Hilscher, President of the **St. Croix Oak Savanna (MN) Chapter** says, "The Maplewood Nature Center (MNC) naturalist and our chapter continue correspondence and look for ways to partner. Wild Ones brochures with SCOS information are included within packets for their native plant programs and available to visitors."

Susan Melia-Hancock, President of the **Mid-Missouri (MO) Chapter**, noted that they "...held a joint seed propagation workshop with the Hawthorn Chapter of the Native Plant Society."

Dawn Zuengler, President of **Mid-Mitten (MI) Chapter** says, "In 2009, we will have a program at the Hampton Elementary School to get a tour of the rain gardens, on their first anniversary. Our chapter donated several hundred dollars to the Hampton Elementary School rain garden project in 2008."

Maureen Carbery of the **Habitat Resource Network (PA) Chapter** says, "For the winter of 2008, we coordinated our meetings with three of the local watershed organizations to emphasize the connection between water quality and native plants/sustainable landscaping. We featured topics of interest to both Wild Ones and watershed people. It was great to connect to their membership, and we continue to actively foster these relationships."

THE DAYLILY (*Hemerocallis* sp.)

By Janet Allen

INVASIVES ON THE HORIZON

Adding insult to injury

"The native American beauties that turned rural roads into blazes of color in the days when America was naturally beautiful!" Wouldn't you know that people – even this nursery – often call this invasive plant a "native"? As galling as it may be, it's understandable. All our lives, we've seen this plant growing in so many places – in ditches, along roadsides, in grandma's garden – it seems like it belongs here. But it doesn't.

This "native" is not a native here

This Asian native was introduced to our continent by way of Europe in the late nineteenth century. It's often referred to as the "native daylily" (or sometimes orange, tawny, or common daylily – even ditch or outhouse daylily because of its popular locations), but its botanical name is *Hemerocallis fulva*. A related invasive daylily, known as lemon daylily (*H. flava*), isn't distributed as widely.

Daylilies spread primarily by thick, tuberous roots that rapidly become large, dense clumps. The infestations of daylilies seen in meadows, floodplains, moist woods, and forest edges are often the long-living remnants of plantings from old home sites, or have escaped from adjacent home landscapes.

They're beautiful, so what's wrong?

And as with many invasive plants, the reasons they're problematic ecologically are often the very reasons they're popular. "They are self-multiplying, and are a fast spreader," says one advertisement. Another touts them as maintenance-free since "the mat of roots and the heavy shade of the dense foliage prevent other species from invading the colony." Another company displays a photograph demonstrating that impenetrable mats of these daylilies can grow even in a heavily shaded woodland. Precisely.

An Internet discussion about *H. fulva* illustrates some common misconceptions about invasive plants. One comment was that they would plant this daylily (and other non-natives) anyway since "how many of us humans are native to the areas we call home?" But people are not the same as plants, especially with respect to their role in ecosystems.

Another comment was in response to a question about removing a troublesome patch of daylilies in a home landscape. The answer given was that they "belong away from the garden, better for along the road." It illustrates the common misconception that invasive plants are only a problem when they disrupt home landscapes, and what happens in natural areas is inconsequential.

Easy to sprout, but not so easy to get rid of

It's not an easy job, but when you do remove daylilies, make sure you get every bit of the tuber, since it can re-sprout. And don't throw away whole plants since they might take hold wherever they land. They do seem to compost nicely, though.

What about the many, many daylily cultivars? True, they don't spread aggressively by rhizomes as does *H. fulva*, but they do form large, dense clumps. Even more importantly – invasive or not – non-native plants such

as these don't participate in the ecosystem, providing food for insects and other wildlife, as do native plants.

Excellent alternatives

Rather than hybrid daylilies, many beautiful native plants are good alternatives to the ditch daylily. Try ox-eye sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*), Canada lily (*Lilium canadense*), wood lily (*Lilium philadelphicum*), Turk's cap lily (*Lilium superbum*), and three-lobed coneflower (*Rudbeckia triloba*). These true native-American beauties will turn your yard into blazes of color and make America naturally beautiful. ★



Daylily (*Hemerocallis fulva*) Original book source: Prof. Dr. Otto Wilhelm Tomé Flora von Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz 1885, Gera, Germany.

NATIVE PLANTS

Beyond the bird feeder. Gardening for Birds and Other Wildlife Silphiums

By Mariette Nowak

"What a thousand acres of silphiums looked like when they tickled the bellies of the buffalo is a question never again to be answered, and perhaps not even asked." Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*. Silphiums are classic prairie plants, once blossoming across almost two-thirds of the American continent. Robust and showy, the different species of silphium can be best distinguished by their leaves. Compass plant (*Silphium laciniatum*) has deeply lobed leaves that tend to align in a north-south direction. Prairie dock (*S. terebinthinaceum*) has huge, coarse, unlobed basal leaves. Cup Plant (*S. perfoliatum*)'s leaves unite to form a cup around the stem.

Rosinweeds, of which there are a number of species, have oval mostly opposite leaves that are closely spaced along their stems. Among them, *Silphium integrifolium* has the widest range, and is found from Ontario to Texas, and west to Wyoming and New Mexico.

Value for Birds

Silphiums offer birds all three of their basic needs – food, cover, and water. In summer, the nectar-filled flowers of cup plant feed hummingbirds. Later as summer wanes into autumn, goldfinches flock to the silphiums to feast on their nutritious seeds, which are also eaten by other songbirds and by sharp-tailed grouse. The dense foliage of silphiums, particularly cup plant and rosinweed, provide protection for the birds from predators and harsh weather. The "cups" of cup plant retain water after rainfalls, and are popular bathing pools for small birds.

Other Wildlife Values

Cup plant nectar not only feeds hummingbirds, but also bees and butterflies. Tree frogs have been seen sitting on their "cups," and butterflies, other insects, and small mammals come for a drink. Silphium weevils feed and lay their eggs on the plants. The seeds of silphiums are eaten by mice, and deer sometimes graze on the young plants.



Donna VanBuecken took this photo in her garden. Note the cupped leaves on the *S. perfoliatum* stalk in the center of the shot. They actually hold dew and rainwater.

Landscape Notes

The three taller silphiums – compass plant (three to ten feet), prairie dock (two to ten feet), and cup plant (three to eight feet) – can be used as bright, bold backdrops for sunny perennial beds. They are also useful for borders or screens. The bright blossoms and dense foliage of rosinweeds (two to four feet) make them excellent additions within flower beds. Cup plant grows well in both full and partial sun, but the other three Silphiums need full sun.

Cup plant can be aggressive, but this may be desirable in some situations. For example, it is one of the few plants that compete well with the invasive reed canary grass.

All silphiums are choice species for prairie and meadow plantings. Cup plant does the best in moist to wet conditions, so is also well suited for the background of rain gardens and for wet prairies. The other silphiums do well at the edge of rain gardens or in more mesic prairies.

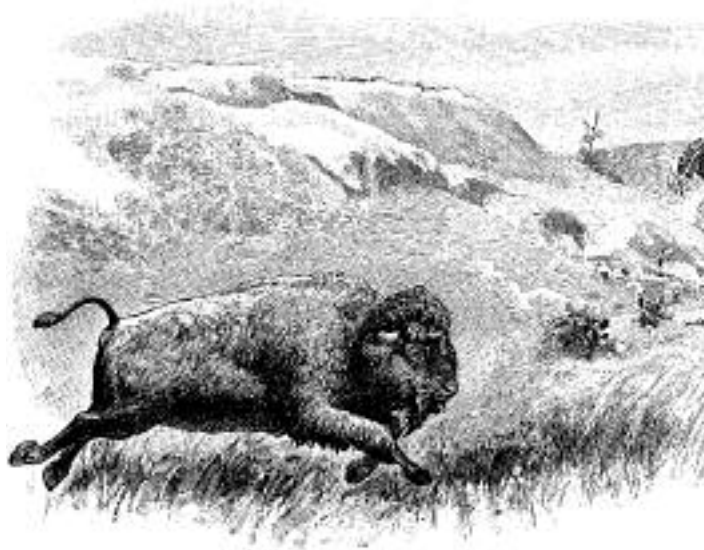
I think of the taller silphiums as the American equivalent of the hollyhock. Although the blossoms of silphiums last only a short time, new flowers open in succession for up to three weeks. Their distinctive foliage will add interest to your landscape throughout the year.

Also of Interest

Silphiums are distinguished from sunflowers (*Helianthus species*) by their flowers. Like most plants in the composite family, both have ray and disk flowers in their flower heads. In silphiums, the conspicuous yellow ray flowers are fertile and produce seed, while the central disk flowers are sterile. The opposite is true for sunflowers – the central disk flowers form the seeds.

The resin that forms after the flower heads of a compass plant have been removed has been used as chewing gum by Indians and pioneers. Several other silphiums also have edible sap.

Grazing has been an important factor in the loss of silphiums (and other species) from prairies. According to John Curtis in his classic book, *Vegetation of Wisconsin*, cattle and horses seek out compass plant and prairie dock "like hidden candy at a child's birthday party," and can wipe them out within two years. ★



Buffalo in the Old West. From *The Beginner's American History*, 1904.

blooms of purple New England asters, white asters, stiff goldenrod and iron weed.

Julie died on the 28th of September, when the fall colors were gorgeous. Lorrie Otto and other Wild Ones went to her funeral. On the large white casket was a tiny bouquet of asters arranged in a pot the size of a baseball. The contrast in size, the fact that they were the only flowers anywhere, and were all from the berms which Julie had lived long enough to see as she had imagined them, was a great comfort to everyone present.

A year or two later, while Lorrie and Jan were again getting rid of weeds, a woman walked past. She pumped her fist and yelled, "Hoooooray Julie!" A man also came by who said, "When I die I hope they do a memorial like this for me." For many following years Lorrie drove past the berms, without stopping to look closely. She assumed that someone was removing invasives. It was a shock to see plumes of burdock and swaths of Canada thistle during the winter of 2007. Four patches of burdock had seeds so thick on the ground that the burs had clumped together in clots the size of pillows.

It took a long time to pick up all the burs. Lorrie contacted Julie's husband, who said he was selling the property, and was touched that Lorrie still cared passionately about the berms. Partly because it would add to the value of the house, he granted Otto permission to tackle the weeds. Later he introduced Otto to the new owner. He gave her permission to take care of the berms for the next two years.

At her own expense, Lorrie hired Wild Ones member Paul Ryan to remove the Canada thistle and burdock. Early in 2008, she ordered three dozen pale purple cone flowers from Bill Carter of Prairie Moon Nursery, and orange milkweed from Neil Diboll of Prairie Nursery. During the spring plant sale held by Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, Randy Powers, of Prairie Future Seeds, sold her a flat of liatris. All the nurseries said that the dormant plants should be brought to life with plenty of water.

Unfortunately, there was a three-week drought that spring when Ryan put the native plants into areas where he had dug out weeds. He and Lorrie had to haul gallon jugs of water from her house, because the outside faucet was turned off at the berms. It was very labor intensive, and the plants were slow to respond, until finally

heavy rains fell. Lorrie measured ten inches in her rain gauge over a long weekend. The plants have not been watered since.

It is difficult to assess their progress because plants from the previous two plantings are in full bloom, including a great deal of monarda, which is colorful and beautiful. Bumblebees attracted by its splendid incense tend to each flower. Nice patches of false sunflower provide yellow color. Wild roses that Julie planted long ago still bloom in the south corner, but Indian hemp has been surprisingly aggressive on the southeast side of the berms. Fortunately, the person in charge of the new owner's lawn is a member of Wild Ones, and hopefully the owner of the berms will appreciate their value in terms of the great variety of species of native plants, including Turks cap lily, which Julie herself planted.

The colors in summer look like a Ruth Grotenwrath painting, but every season, including winter, brings its own beauty. These poetic mounds have inspired at least one person – the entomologist Janice Stiefel – to join Wild Ones. Janice said that she nearly fell off her bicycle when she came across the fragrant mounds covered in insects attracted to the native plants. ★



WILD Center Is Mortgage Free

The Wild Ones National Board is pleased to announce that we are now mortgage free. We have a long way to go to develop our demonstration gardens, but it surely is a wonderful feeling to know that we can do so without a huge debt hanging over our heads.

Thanks to the many volunteers who have extended their hands and hearts to the efforts, the gardens are beginning to take shape. If you're in the area, and want to lend a hand, don't hesitate to stop over. We'll put you to work, and it will be worth the effort.

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 the 25th Anniversary Book, and 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.

Downspouts and gutters to catch rain water are automatically installed on new or remodeled buildings. Their purpose is to direct the flow of roof run-off away from entrances, from foundations, to prevent erosion, or to eliminate the splashing of mud onto siding. Placement of downspouts, however, can cause water problems in basements, or create erosion.

Getting the downspout water to flow away from the building foundation and toward a water garden, or into a natural landscape area, is the purpose of the drainage design I have constructed at my home. The design eliminates the gutter, downspout, and any horizontal downspout extension which is not in aesthetic harmony with nature.

A camouflaged drainage system has been constructed right next to and to the left of our front-door entrance. While the system is in full view for anyone coming to the front door, it is so well camouflaged with rocks, leaves, and moss, that none can discern its existence.

Fourteen feet of roof gutter and a corner downspout were removed, so cleaning this section of gutter every fall is now history. All the rainwater flowing off the roof on the left side of the front door now simply flows off the roof and splashes onto what appears to be rocks below.

The twenty-four feet of gutter located on the right side of and above the door remains. However, the downspout that served this section was also removed. It used to deliver the rainwater into an area where the soil had settled over the years. Since it could not drain away it would seep into the basement. With the downspout removed, rainwater now cascades out the

Camouflaged Drainage Landscape Design With Nature in Mind

Article and photos by Richard J. Ehrenberg

end of the gutter, like a waterfall, into the same area, which now has a new drainage system. The water no longer seeps into the basement.

The secret to my drainage system consists of hidden, sloped, sheet-metal roofing which channels the rainwater

away from the foundation.

The corrugated-metal roofing needed for this system can be purchased at a home supply center. The sheets come in widths of three feet and four feet, with widths of six feet, eight feet, and longer – and can be cut to your specifications. The sheets come in various colors, and I suggest green or brown to blend with nature in the event that a part of the metal shows through the camouflage. When laid on the ground the corrugated ribbing in the sheets should be oriented in the direction the water is to flow away from the foundation. If more than a four-foot width of sheeting is necessary, a second sheet may be laid parallel to the first and overlapped by about six inches to ensure that no water drains through before it gets to the end of the drain system. Note that fiberglass corrugated roofing is also available, and may last longer than metal since it is not subject to rusting.

Remember that water flows downhill and seeks the lowest point. It will not automatically flow from one sheet to the next if you have not provided an appropriate incline.

Prior to laying the corrugated metal sheeting in place, it's necessary to create the appropriate topography with additional soil. Purchase, in bulk, a cubic yard of top soil or whatever is needed. Garden centers and some stone yards, but not discount stores which sell garden supplies, will sell in bulk, which

is much less costly than soil in bags. Select a heavy soil which will provide a firm foundation, and prevent water from seeping back to the foundation. A light, airy soil full of rich humus will settle over time and undo the purpose of directing water down an incline and away from the house. Use as much soil as needed to fill any low areas next to the foundation, and to raise the soil level so that any water that falls next to the house will run downhill away from the house. An incline of at least a three-inch drop



Autumn leaves blown in quickly break down to provide a medium for volunteer plants to move into. The speed of this process can be increased by the gardener introducing seeds and rooted seedlings.

The type of stone you use should be natural to your area. Unfortunately, garden centers don't pay attention to regional differences. They provide white marble, pea gravel, and even volcanic rock for any and all landscaping, regardless of natural surroundings.

for each twelve inches of horizontal measurement is adequate, but of course can be steeper. Compact the new soil by walking on it, or by using a hand-held compacting device that may be rented.

After the incline has been constructed and extended out and away from the foundation as far as you determine is necessary to prevent water from seeping back, lay the roofing material on top, being sure to overlap secondary sheets by about six inches. Let it rain once or twice to see how well the rainwater runs away and toward where you want it to flow.

Once you have decided the system functions well, it's time to camouflage the sheet metal by covering it with a single layer of stone. The stone has multiple functions: it stabilizes the sheet metal while hiding it and blending it into the background; and it serves as a surface on which friendly moss might grow.

The type of stone that you use should be natural to your area. For instance, here in the glaciated terrain of southeastern Wisconsin, you'll have round-edged cobble-like stone. The last glacier did not pass through the southwestern corner of the state. Hence the use of straight-edged sandstone or limestone is more appropriate for natural landscaping. Unfortunately, garden centers don't pay attention to regional differences. They provide white marble, pea gravel, and even volcanic rock for any and all landscaping, regardless of natural surroundings. The use of processed rocks which are crushed and sorted to produce a uniform size is artificial and does not fit into a natural landscape design, other than for use on paths, parking areas, and driveways.

Don't just dump the stone from your wheelbarrow and walk away. The result will look like a new pile of discarded rocks. In addition, the weight of rocks piled high might crush the corrugated ribs on the metal sheets. (The ribs prevent the metal from sagging.) Starting at the bottom of the slope, field stone must be laid individually, next to each other, like pieces of a puzzle being woven together. This replicates what nature creates over a period of a thousand years at the bottom of a creek where water continues to move the stones until each one finds a niche and fits tightly into an overall pattern.

After the rocks are in place, nature will finish the camouflage. The leaves of autumn will find their place among the rocks with help from wind. Annual decomposition will control



This camouflaged drainage area is next to the entry. One might choose to quickly do an interplanting, or might keep the rocks clearly evident, removing leaves and volunteers.

accumulation. Wait a few years and the moisture from splashing rainwater will help add the final touch of moss onto the rocks.

The rainwater from my house does not run into a specially designed water garden, or pool for birds to bath in, although it could. My front-yard forest simply absorbs the runoff and uses it in the natural process. At the end of the metal roofing I have planted *mertensia* (*Mertensia virginica*). Volunteers are common blue violets (*Viola papilionacea*), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), Dutch-

man's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), and pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*). A few of the violets are even growing among the rocks where leaves have apparently decomposed to create a touch of soil. Various sedges would not be misplaced in this area.

I would invite anyone to come look at my drainage system, but fortunately it's too well camouflaged to be able to see all of it. ★

The seven previous articles about Green Gables, by Richard Ehrenberg, are now on the Wild Ones Members web site at for-wild.org/download/Journal/, starting with the May/June issue (#3) 2008.

You Are Invited

The Madison (WI) Chapter of Wild Ones is sponsoring an "Open Yard" at Green Gables, the fifteen-year-old native/natural-landscaped yard of Richard and Kim Ehrenberg. After you've read so much about this transformation, in several issues of the Wild Ones Journal, here is your opportunity to mingle with other Wild Ones members, enjoy a cup of coffee, cold soda, and cookies, while experiencing this .80-acre yard, totally designed with nature in mind. See how to use sumac, how seventy trees fit into a normal size front yard, and how prairie plants fit between forest plant communities. 505 East Clay Street, Whitewater, Wisconsin. 12 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, August 22, 2009.

RSVPs appreciated, to the Ehrenbergs at 262-473-7491.

NATIVE FOODS

By Rita Bober

When I began adding native plants, shrubs, and trees to our homestead, and identifying edible and medicinal plants while studying herbalism, I wondered what native people from the Midwest ate when they were the sole inhabitants of this region. This article will share some of my findings on native food.

The Anishinabe people first lived on the shores of the "Great Salt Water in the East." Prophets told them that to survive, they must move west. As they traveled west, they would know where to settle when they found "the food that grows on water." When they reached the Great Lakes area, they did find "the food that grows on water" – Mano'min or wild rice.¹ Since that time, wild rice has been one of the main foods of the Anishinabe people, especially the Ojibway.

Another important food of this area is the sap from Ninautig, the maple tree. At one time, all the maple syrup in North America was produced by native people. Sap was also gathered from birch, poplar, and basswood trees.

Native people of the Great Lakes area were hunters and gatherers. They survived on what they could find in the woods and lakes around them. They ate according to the seasons. To the people, all this was given to them by the Great Spirit, and their lifestyle reflected a gratitude for all of life's bounty.

Their diet included meat or fish, when it was available. This was supplemented with greens, herbs, berries, and roots. In an unpublished paper, Grandmother Kee-waydinoquay,² an Ojibway elder, listed the unique foods that had been used in earlier times. Meat included: venison, porcupine, goose, wild turkey, partridge, quail, pigeon, buffalo, elk, bear, rabbit, squirrel, beaver, groundhog, muskrat, raccoon, turtle, bull frogs, and ducks.

Fish included: trout, smelt, whitefish, pickerel, bass, fish eggs, salmon, catfish, perch, carp, muskie, pike, and more. Grandmother had been raised in a traditional native family, but was also trained in the Western tradition as an ethno-botanist, and was familiar with many local plants.

She stated that the people gathered a variety of foods from the woods, fields, and lakes to supplement their meals. These included: cattails, wild leeks and onions, wild greens, mushrooms, rose hips, sumac, water lily, wild cranberries, cactus, wild cucumber, nettles, serviceberry, raspberries, wild crabapples, elderberries, blackberries, blueberries, and wild cherry – as well as nuts: acorn, chestnuts, walnuts, hazelnuts, and hickory.

Along with meat, wild rice, maple syrup, and eggs gathered from bird nests, they enjoyed a great variety of foods. Native people did not have dairy products such as butter, milk, or cream, but they did have a variety of fats, including animal fats, particularly bear, and nut oils from acorns, beechnuts, butternuts, hazelnuts, sunflower seeds, and black walnuts. Tradi-

tional calcium and mineral sources included eating whole fish, making bone soup or broths, and eating greens. Babies were breast fed for several years.

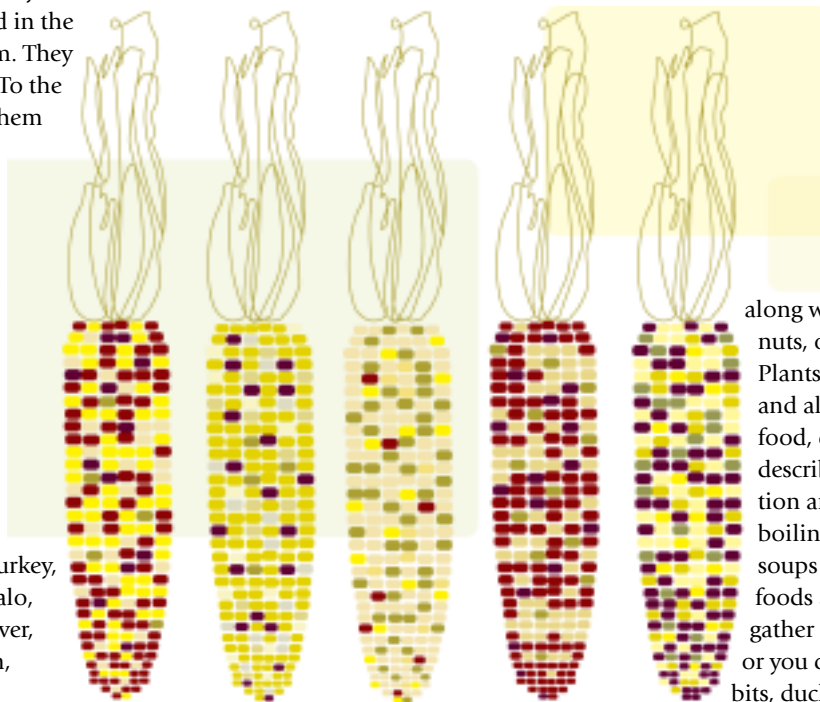
Frances Densmore, an ethnologist, detailed the uses of nearly two hundred plants in her book about the Chippewa Indians (another word for Ojibway), *How Indians Use Wild Plants for Food, Medicine & Crafts*. Along with the items listed above, Densmore included: juneberry, bearberry, wild ginger, common milkweed, aster, creeping snowberry, wild bean or hog peanut, wintergreen, Jerusalem artichoke, mountain mint, Labrador tea, bugleweed, chokecherry, bur oak acorns, red and wild currant, arrowhead, bulrush, basswood bark, hemlock leaves, and wild grapes.

Carolyn Raine, of Seneca heritage, wrote about historical references to native foods in her book, *A Woodland Feast: Native American Foodways of the 17th & 18th Centuries*. Her book is based on primary source documentation, from over one hundred original seventeenth and eighteenth century journals, captivity narratives, and ethno-botanical research.

Additional foods to consider include:

skunk, snake, otter, tree bark, rendered tallow, sturgeon, gull's eggs, swans, organ meats and blood, broths of dried frogs, and beaver tails. The general rule for any meal was to cook some meat in a large pot

along with whatever greens, roots, nuts, or berries were in season. Plants and animals were honored, and all parts were used either for food, clothing, or utensils. Raine describes methods of food preparation and cooking including roasting, boiling, drying, as well as making soups and stews. Today, many native foods are still available. You can gather meat by hunting and fishing, or you can raise buffalo, turkey, rabbits, ducks, and quail yourself. Many of



the green plants natives used are still growing today. You can grow many of these plants in your own yard. It is commonly thought that edible plants like lamb's quarters, purslane, chickweed, red clover, and sheep's sorrel are native, but they were brought here by European settlers. Curly dock (*Rumex crispus*) is edible and native to North America.

Native people of the Midwest acquired seeds of pumpkin, corn, beans, and squash from Mexico and South America, which they often grew in round gardens. Europeans referred to "corn" as grain, while natives called "corn" maize. Maize came in many varieties, including a soft variety known as bread maize, an eight-rowed flint, dent, and even popcorn.

They came in many colors: white, yellow, red, black, purple or blue, and calico or multi-colored. The grandmothers had many ways to cook or use maize. It was boiled, roasted, dried, parched, pounded into meal, and boiled with wood ashes to make hominy.

Natives used maize or hominy, fresh or dried, for bread. Pounded meal was mixed with water, and this was made into small cakes that were either baked in hot ashes (ash cakes) or dropped into boiling water, soup, or stew to make boiled maize bread or dumplings.

Many varieties of beans were also brought up from the South. Both shelled and edible pod varieties such as cranberry, navy, arrow, "snap" or "string," as well as several types of kidney beans were grown. The beans were usually boiled with meat or vegetables, and were also mixed with cornmeal to make cakes and dumplings. They were often dried so they could be stored and used during the winter.

Different varieties of squash and pumpkins were also grown in the gardens. The grandmothers would boil, bake, or roast them near the fire, and dried them for use in winter. Although maize (corn), beans, and squash were not native to this area, they were grown here before European explorers arrived.

If you are interested in growing some of the foods that the native people ate, first check around your area. You will often find sites that have black elderberry and blackberry bushes. Trees to look for include sugar maple, black walnut, wild black cherry, mulberry, and white oak. Each of these has a "gift" to share with you. If you

live near water, you may find cattails and water lilies. In the woods, violets, mature Mayapples, and ramps (wild leeks) – and in your fields, there may be Jerusalem artichokes and milkweed plants. There are even plants that grow in our native prairies that are edible. For example, you can make tea with the leaves from monarda, mountain mint, and New Jersey tea.

Check out the resources below for more ideas. Many of the fruits and greens that we grow in our gardens today are variations of those that were used by indigenous people. Eating things that grow in the wild, could save you money. Just make sure they have not been sprayed or are close to the road where salt and car emissions have polluted them.

Native seeds for maize, dry beans, and squashes can be found through Seed Savers Exchange. There are too many people today for all of us to eat "wild" food all the time, so growing some of them in our "wild" places or in our gardens is a great idea.

Native people lived for years off what they harvested in the wild, and were very strong and healthy. Perhaps it is time for us to consider including "native wild foods" into our everyday cuisine. Be sure to thank the plant for its gift, and save some for the next generation. ★

Resources:

1. Chapter 14 from *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*. Edward Benton-Banai, Indian Country Communications, Inc., Hayward, Wisconsin, 1988.

2. Keewaydinoquay Margaret Peschel grew up in northern Michigan. She was a teacher, storyteller, and ethno-botanist. See her web site holyhilcenter.com to learn more about her legacy.

How Indians Use Wild Plants for Food, Medicine & Crafts. Frances Densmore, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1974.

A Woodland Feast: Native American Foodways of the 17th & 18th Centuries. Carolyn Raine, Morning Star Publications, Huber Heights, Ohio, 1997.

A Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants: Eastern and central North America. Lee Allen Peterson and Roger Tory Peterson, Houghton Mifflin Co, New York, 1977. Field identification of more than 370 edible wild plants plus poisonous look-alikes.

Wild Plant Family Cookbook. Patricia K. Armstrong, Prairie Sun Consultants, Naperville, IL, 1997. A cookbook, not a plant identification book but contains much helpful information.

Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers: A Field Guide. Doug Ladd, Frank Oberle & others, The Globe Pequot Press, Guilford, CT, 1995. Lists plants' medicinal and edible uses by Native Americans.

Elegant Connections



It's nothing short of elegant, and the mayfly/trout connection we fly-fishers look so hard for is just a thin slice of it. There are also the game animals that drink from the stream, and the fishing birds that live on young trout, muskrats that eat the aquatic plants, and the swallows that eat the mayflies and live in the cliffs that were excavated by the stream itself.

A good ecologist can put dovetail into dovetail until the whole thing stretches out of sight. We call it an ecosystem now; earlier Americans called it the Sacred Circle. Either way, it can make your poor little head swim with a vision of a thing of great size and strength that still depends on the underpinning of its smallest members.

From *Sex, Death, and Fly-fishing*, by John Gierach. Simon and Schuster Paperbacks, 1990. New York, New York. Available through our Wild Ones Amazon-Associate Bookstore for-wild.org/bookstore.

**Be sure to tell them
you saw it right
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update, as the third edition had been out of print for several years. Dog-eared xeroxed copies were being lifted from libraries, and the authors were receiving almost daily inquiries about when a new edition would be available. Unfortunately, the Arboretum had gone in a different direction, and was not encouraging the development of a fourth-edition manuscript.

Aware of the need and the interest, I was able to convince the Indiana Academy of Science (IAS) to sponsor the book; without their support the 1994 edition would not exist. The Arboretum has wonderful facilities and outstanding collections (including an immense library and one of the best herbaria in the Chicago region), but they totally missed an opportunity here. The IAS sold two thousand copies pre-publication, and in excess of six thousand thus far – more than the first three editions combined, which is phenomenal for a four-pound, nearly one-thousand-page reference book, with no pictures.

As special publications editor for the IAS, I was privileged to be the production manager and publication supervisor for the fourth edition. Because of my extensive involvement with the book (I am also a field-oriented botanist/bryologist), *Wild Ones Journal* editor, Maryann Whitman, asked if I would write an article about the importance of Floyd and Jerry's baby, *Plants of the Chicago Region*. She caught me with my defenses down, and I was unable to resist her charm.

I like lists. I make one almost every day. I find them to be therapeutic and useful. *Plants of the Chicago Region* is (in large part) a list of the plants that share (or in some cases formerly shared) the greater Chicago landscape with us. But it is unlike any other plant checklist. The subtitle, which most overlook, points this out – *An Annotated Checklist of the Vascular Flora of the Chicago Region, With Keys, Notes, Notes on Local Distribution, Ecology, and Taxonomy, a System for the Qualitative Evaluation of Plant Communities, a Natural Divisions Map, and Descriptions of Natural Plant Communities*.

Because of my penchant for lists, I thought it would be appropriate to use one here (not rank-ordered, and arbitrarily limited to twelve categories), to explain why *Plants of the Chicago Region* is revered.

User Friendly The book is alphabetically ordered, rather than by evolutionary relationship (phylogeny) as is traditional for taxonomic treatments. The book is so easy to use that an index is not included. This is hard to believe for a publication with this much information and of this size, until you realize that the book itself is the index. That was the genius of Floyd Swink – it was a novel, but costly approach. Floyd was one of the most gifted humans I have ever encountered. He was also a very nice person.

Up-To-Date, Reliable and Thorough The book is the result of countless hours and years of careful and extensive field, herbarium, and literature work. The maps are accurate, convenient, and well-sized. The list of synonyms is extensive, complete, and easy to use. Despite the large number of species covered (twenty-five hundred-

plus), the checklist is as comprehensive as any flora available for any region in the country. Ed Voss (botanist, author, *Michigan Flora*) commented that, unlike many references, he could always rely on the validity of the information in "Swink & Wilhelm," which made the daunting task he had undertaken (the flora of Michigan) that much easier. Before there was spell-check there was the "Swink treatment." His book, despite its complexity, has almost no orthographic errors because of his superhuman typing and editing abilities.

Nativity Unfortunately, the number of introduced organisms (especially flowering plants), and the problems they cause continue to increase. Approximately one-third of the species found in the Chicago region are introduced. Many of them are now naturalized. Accordingly, the authors clearly designate the non-native species (italicized with place of origin noted).

Floristic Quality Assessment (C Values) The most unique feature of the book is the System for the Qualitative Evaluation of Plant Communities. This system uses an assigned coefficient of conservatism (C value) for each of the sixteen hundred-plus native species in the checklist. The values range from 0-10, with the low end used for species not indicative of a natural community, whereas a 9 or 10 rating indicates a species expected or associated with an intact natural community. This novel system has a few critics, but it has revolutionized landscape assessment – and its use continues to expand.

Plant Associates I know of no other book that does so much with associates. In fact, one could argue that there is too much good information. The fault here is that the authors simply knew too much. In fact, I would be willing to wager a sum of money or a period of menial servitude, that Wilhelm knows more organisms than any living biologist/naturalist. And, like Schulenberg and Swink, he is a humble and considerate gentleman.

Literature Cited *PCR* has the most extensive bibliography (sixty pages) of any flora I have encountered, but the book is not just a literature survey. It is based on first-hand accounts, not hearsay (i.e., it is not a literature compilation). The authors are plantsmen, not just botanists.

Illustrated Glossary First presented in the fourth edition, this feature has been so widely acclaimed that the IAS has fielded numerous requests from around the country for permission to use it as part of their plant taxonomy classes, or for inclusion in other books. In fact, *PCR* has been used as a textbook by more than a dozen colleges and universities (several outside the Chicago region) even though that was not an expected or intended purpose.

Practical Keys It has been said that, "Keys are made by those who don't need them for those who can't use them," but that is not the case with this book. Based largely on vegetative features and wholly artificial (not attempting to show evolutionary relationships), their simplicity and utility has garnered high praise. This is one of the main reasons for *PCR*'s success. The keys are original, and based on Floyd's concepts developed over many years, and not copied from



other books as is so often the case in floras. The keys are so good that the morphological descriptions usually employed for floras are omitted or succinctly modified, and included as more practical prose.

Remarks/Comments My favorite part of most floras is the gossip section (not that all have one). I refer here to the narrative that follows the often dry description (in which the salient feature[s] usually have not [regrettably] been delineated). The comments section is where the neat stuff is found, such as: what are the associates; is the species becoming rare or proliferating; where does it grow; why does it grow there; what problem is it causing; when did it arrive; what is it mostly likely to be confused with; what is the best field feature(s)? Again, with *PCR* the authors have hit on a format that users favor. They convey the information succinctly, but in a compelling, and sometimes humorous or matter-of-fact, manner (see for example, *Lysimachia X commixta*, *Muhlenbergia cuspidata*, *Smilax rotundifolia*, *Woodwardia areolata*, et cetera).

Historical Document One would not immediately (or normally) think of a flora as an historical document. Think again. *Plants of the Chicago Region* is littered with accounts of what has (and is happening) to our landscape (and our plant neighbors) and why (e.g., *Ceratocephalus testiculatus*, Natural Plant Communities, et cetera.). It is especially rich with discussion on the relationship between means of transportation and plant occurrence.

Habitat Info The authors do an excellent job of defining and listing the haunt(s) favored or required for each taxon. They include a well-documented section on the natural divisions and plant communities that occur in the area, although an expansion of this portion of the book would be helpful. Surprisingly, the book is also a reference for many gardeners, especially for the phenological (flowering time) data. The National Wetland Category designation found at the end of each entry is quite useful.

Unique There are lots of floras. Some are not that well done, a few are outstanding (like Ed Voss's three-volume *Michigan Flora*), but none is like *Plants of the Chicago Region*. The unorthodox formatting and the fact that the book's coverage happens to be one of the great metropolitan areas in the world (with a surprisingly rich flora), located at the southern end of the most enormous assemblage of sweet water oceans in the world, makes it more special. ★

There is good news. The fourth edition of *PCR* is not out of print. The various web sites that indicate otherwise are wrong. The IAS did a limited reprinting in September, 2007. Learn how to obtain a copy at indianaacademyofscience.org (see special publications).

The legacy continues. Gerry is now collaborating with Laura Rericha to produce a substantially expanded rewrite. Laura is a Swink protégé, a naturalist with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, an ant and bird authority, and (like Floyd) intellectually gifted. The new tome, re-titled *Flora of the Chicago Region*, will include animal associates (insects and vertebrates), cryptogam associates (bryophytes and lichens) when they are obvious, an enhanced natural communities section, name derivations, a diagnostic illustration for every genus, and several other surprises. As unique as the fourth edition is, the new book will be even more exceptional. It will be stunning in its scope, yet in keeping with its predecessors, accurate and easy to use. The more complete stories (life history information) will allow us to better understand our environment, and will serve as a resource to help save and restore the landscape if we have the courage and wisdom to do so.

To learn how the new book is progressing and how you might be able to help speed its development, see *Flora of the Chicago Region Project (FCR)* at indacadsipubs.org, which is linked to the Conservation Design Forum web site.

What's Wild on the Wild Ones Web Site

Chapter Info

For contact and general information on chapters go to for-wild.org/chapters.html.

Chapter Educational Programs

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Special Events

For information on special events hosted by chapters and by National, go to for-wild.org/events.html.

Environmental Conferences

For information on environmental conferences, go to for-wild.org/chapters/Conf/.

New Web Site

The Wild Ones National Web Site Committee has presented its proposal to the National Board – and it has been accepted – and we will be choosing a web site developer soon. Phase Two will be development of additional information. If you have suggestions, please contact execdirector@for-wild.org. ★

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sharing Douglas Tallamy

A note from Martha Nitz of the Oakland (MI) Chapter



Click beetle.
(*Agrypnus murinus*)
Photo courtesy of
Leviathan 1983.

Douglas Tallamy and my grandson Ben have a lot in common. They both celebrate the great diversity and interaction of native plants and animals: They like bugs. I discovered this a year ago when Ben, then five, came over and found me engrossed in reading *Bringing Nature Home*. His eyes popped when he saw the photo of the click beetle (page 201). We had to talk about scary fake eyes, and find photos of other tricky insects. Some resembled characters from "Star Wars." The spittlebug larvae (page 186) drew a big, "Ee-yeew-oo!"

I was reading the photo captions and paraphrasing as fast as I could think. Ben was enthralled. He had me repeat the scientific names – apparently kids love the sound of big words, like "*supercalifragilistikexpialidoshus*."

Of course, grownups too, from many walks of life will be fascinated by this book, but please, share it with the kids. I don't think Ben is unusual. Since our special afternoon I've been paying attention to other youngsters as well, and I think most of them are tuned in to their local web of life.

Since hearing Dr. Tallamy speak at the 2009 Michigan Wild-flower Conference, I appreciate even more that his message is for every one of us, on whatever scale we can manage. I've been focusing on native plants in my yard for the last ten years, and sometimes I've gotten discouraged that I haven't done enough. It was a relief to hear him talk about several things I *have* done. It was encouraging to hear about other projects that are succeeding, and an inspiration to hear him say we can "take the power into our own hands." Gardening is a way of showing that you believe in tomorrow."

Can anyone say "*Philaenus leucophthalmus*"? ★

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Grapevine


By Maryann Whitman

Common Milkweed: insulating and edible. The common milkweed, (*Asclepias syriaca*), is one of the best-known wild plants in North America. Children love to play with the downy fluff in autumn, and during World War II schoolchildren collected milkweed floss to fill life preservers for the armed forces. It's used today to stuff jackets, comforters, and pillows – it has an insulating effect surpassing that of goose down. Native Americans employed the tough stalk fibers for making string and rope. Butterfly enthusiasts adore milkweed as the sustenance for their beloved monarch. Hardly any country dweller can fail to notice this unique, elegant plant so laden with fragrant, multi-colored blossoms in mid-summer. Now I find, on the Sustainable Future web site that, in the spring, until they are about eight-inches tall, milkweed shoots make a delicious boiled vegetable. Their texture and flavor suggest a cross between green beans and asparagus, but it is distinct from either. If you wash all the bugs off carefully, the cooked young flower heads resemble immature broccoli, and have the same flavor as the shoots. I wonder...if you *don't* wash all the bugs off will the cooked flower heads taste like chicken?

YouTube. I don't often send friends to YouTube, but here's one that will pull you up short: www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuFyqzerHS8.

Guide to the Sedges of the Chicago Region. Put out by the Chicago Field Museum, this is a wonderful and colorful start to learning about the sedges of your area – many of these genera appear throughout the Northeast. http://fm2.fieldmuseum.org/plantguides/guide_pdfs/CW4_Carex.pdf.

Mistaken Identity? Invasive Plants and Their Native Look-alikes: an Identification Guide for the Mid-Atlantic, is a full-color, sixty-two-page booklet designed to correct identification of confusingly similar invasive and native plant species. Targeted at land managers, gardeners, conservationists, and all others interested in plants, this booklet covers over twenty invasive species and their native look-alikes. http://www.nybg.org/files/scientists/rnaczi/Mistaken_Identity_Final.pdf. ★



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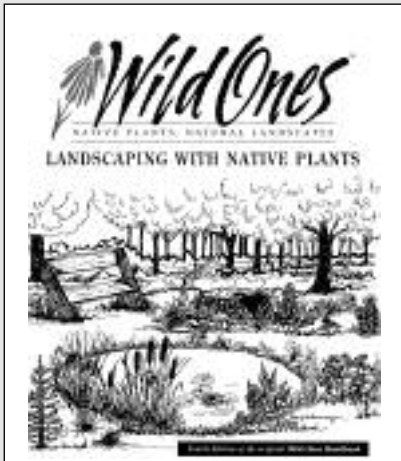
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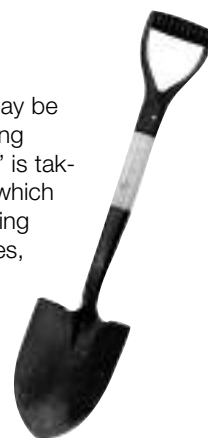
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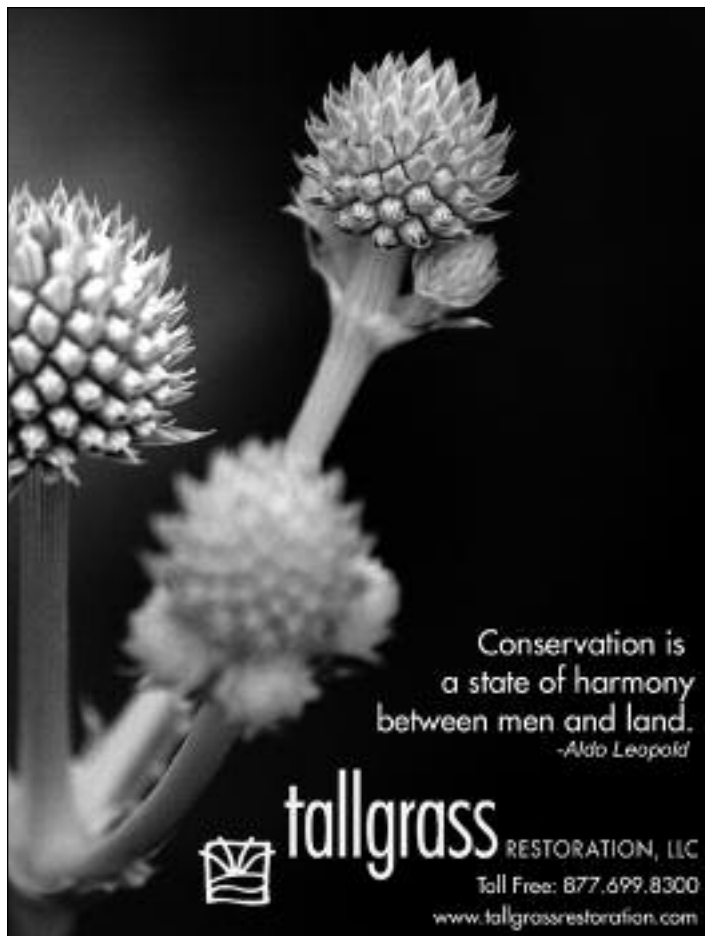
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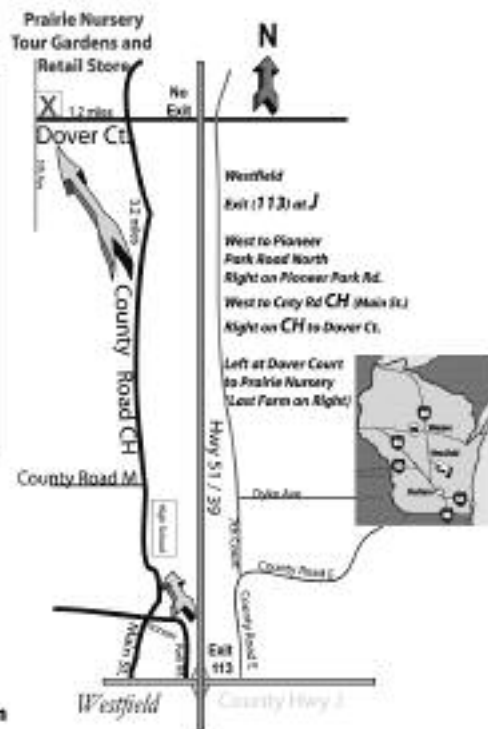
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Fox River Valley Academy Students Help Build WILD Center Raingarden

Many volunteers have stopped by to lend support, and to help with the many activities here at the WILD Center. One of the groups that has been instrumental in helping us develop our raingarden is the Fox River Academy. Fox River Academy is a public environmental-education charter school, with a focus on the Fox River Watershed. Stroebe Marsh, which is part of the WILD Center site, is part of the Fox River waterway, thus a very appropriate partnership. The raingarden has come back beautifully this spring, along with some weeds, but volunteers have been busy trying to keep the non-native plant species in check. See more photos related to the raingarden at for-wild.org/eco/center/rain.html. ★



Shown here at the front entrance of the WILD Center is Sandy Vander Velden, co-founder and lead teacher for the charter school, along with some of the students picking out plants, donated by Stone Silo Nursery, to be transplanted to the raingarden.



Shown here are some of the students, teachers, and parents who worked with Wild Ones members transplanting rescued plants to the raingarden. In addition to the planting, volunteers also dismantled several wooden structures in and around the yard, and also moved many rocks from a couple of retaining walls. Note the rock wall being constructed. Additional plants were donated by Prairie Nursery and Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter member Katie Larabell.

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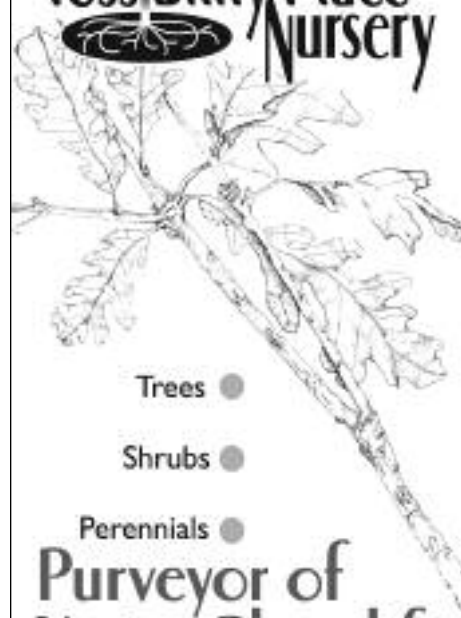
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Giants of the Earth

Once upon a time, the Morton Arboretum was the home of three giants, Ray Schulenberg, Floyd Swink, and Gerould Wilhelm. This elite trio of brilliant botanists produced the highly acclaimed and marvelous botanical encyclopedia, *Plants of the Chicago Region*. One of these giants, Floyd Swink, is shown here identifying a specimen. The story of this book starts on page one. This photo was taken by Jim Nachel, who was the Morton Arboretum photographer at the time. Linda Masters, a student of Swink's, sent in this photo from her collection.



When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it
hitched to everything else in the universe.
John Muir