

a voice  
for the natural  
landscaping  
movement



## JOURNAL

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Thank you. Back cover.

**Seeds for  
Education  
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Changes**



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

## Small Urban Landscaping With Native Species Common Pitfalls (What Goes Wrong)

By Inger Lamb



**WHAT NOT TO DO** This bed was planted at a city hall to show off the potential of native landscaping, but unfortunately the result was a weedy, unattractive flowerbed. Messy, jumbled, and too tall, the plants just flop over and result in a jumbled, undifferentiated mess of vegetation sprouting from the center of a parking lot. Tall plants, such as cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*), big blue stem (*Andropogon gerardii*), and sweet coneflower (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*) grow so tall they should only be used in very large areas. Also, showy tick trefoil (*Desmodium canadense*) is famous for its production of "stick tights," and is not a good ambassador for native plants – and the water-loving monkey flower (*Mimulus ringens*) and cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) will be lost in the first drought.

*I owe many thanks to Wild Ones member, Scott Woodbury, St. Louis (MO) Chapter, and the Shaw Nature Reserve (a division of the Missouri Botanical Garden), for introducing me to the use of native plants for landscaping. I broke my tedious, constant-watering cycle when I began working as a volunteer for Scott: One of my first activities was to help plant a native-landscaping demonstration area. The concept of using native species to establish low-maintenance flowerbeds (that provide habitat) made so much sense that I was an immediate convert.*

*I jumped in head first, planting anything that was native, and making many painful mistakes along the way. I hope my article will help readers avoid some of those mistakes, and streamline the process of establishing attractive native-plant gardens.*

*A terminology note: My native-landscaping experience is based mostly in Iowa, and consequently I tend to use the phrase "prairie species" interchangeably with "native species."*

If the right (native) plants are used, and the site is managed properly until the native species re-seed and fill in any bare ground, an attractive, low-maintenance, low-input, cottage-garden style flowerbed of native wildflowers will result. Unfortunately, many attempts

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## Wild Ones Vision for Our Future



How time flies when I have more gardening to do than I can cram into a short summer. I hope you enjoyed your summer, and are weathering the economic situation all right. Wild Ones at the national level is holding our own, and watching our tight budget closely. We set the 2009 budget assuming a ten percent decrease in membership income

(our primary source) due to the economy, which so far has proven to be an accurate prediction. Seeds for Education grant program donations are down a bit as well.

I am unveiling a *draft* of the proposed Wild Ones Vision that I have been working on with the rest of the National Board of Directors. We have had a mission statement since our inception, but have not had a formal written statement regarding our *vision* for the future. We are also drafting a statement of *values* describing the values we will adhere to as we work to achieve our vision. I would love to hear your opinion on the draft vision statement – what do you like? What is missing? What don't you like? Please e-mail comments to me at [president@for-wild.org](mailto:president@for-wild.org), or mail them to the National Office.

**Wild Ones Vision for Our Future:** To become the most widely-recognized voice for native plants and the sustainable landscaping movement, promoting increased use of wildflowers and other native plants through grassroots efforts including by example, education, marketing, and personalized support.

- We will raise public awareness regarding the benefits that native plants offer in a variety of settings so that landscaping with native plants becomes the norm rather than the exception.

- We will convince the general public that including native plants in home and public landscapes is aesthetically pleasing and healthier for our environment. And that reducing unnecessary turf grass reduces stormwater runoff and unnecessary use of water, fuel, and lawn chemicals.

- We will see the use of native plants extend into an increasing number of areas where plants touch the soil – applications such as agriculture (pollinator support) and public places.

- We will join forces with others to preserve native plants and biodiversity from loss due to development and other forces, including displacement by non-native invasive plants.

### Interpretation:

- *Widely recognized:* Means getting our name and what we do in front of the general public over and over until it is as commonly understood as "Audubon Society = Birds."

- *Leading voice:* Means that we are the group most people think of first when they need information, advice, or support on the "how to" or benefits of landscaping with native plants.

- *Join forces:* When it comes to preserving native plants from loss due to habitat destruction and other related causes we will collaborate with other groups who take on such efforts as their primary mission to lend our support. We understand that the survival of native plants in the long term may depend on these efforts. However, Wild Ones' core focus will be to support native-plant community restoration through education. \*

Carol Andrews, Wild Ones National President  
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**Celebrate  
Wild Ones  
30th Anniversary  
Annual Meeting  
and local chapter  
conference  
Milwaukee  
October 16-17**

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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## Annual Meeting/Conference Update

**The Wild Ones Annual Meeting/Conference** is open to all members, and we encourage you all to participate in this very important meeting – especially the strategy-planning meeting that follows. Along with many other not-for-profit organizations, we are facing some financial uncertainty because of the current economic situation. Help us weather this uncertainty with your support.

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

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

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



## Seeds for Education Guidelines and Deadline Have Changed

### New Due Date for Applications Is October 15

Because of the growing response to our Seeds for Education (SFE) Grant Program, and because of our limited funds and limited staff, the National Board has appointed an SFE Task Force to look into actions to be taken to reduce the administrative burden of operating the Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program. SFE Director Mark Charles, of the Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter, outlined three really significant changes which have come out of these deliberations.

- The SFE grant application **due date has changed from November 15 of each year to October 15 of each year**. This means, grant applications for 2010 must be submitted by **midnight (CST), October 15, 2009**.
- The SFE grant program has been re-focused on "grass roots" projects. The target projects involve young people (elementary through high-school age) in ecological projects based on native plants, where our awards will have a big impact on the project's success.
- 2010 SFE grant applicants will be required to use an electronic application form.

There are other changes as well. Please see the complete guidelines at [www.for-wild.org/seedmony.html](http://www.for-wild.org/seedmony.html).

## WANTED: YOUR VOTE

### Photo Contest People's Choice Award

As you may know, we've done things a little different this year with the Wild Ones Photo Contest – and so voting for the People's Choice award is being done online. The best photos from the contest are now ready for viewing, and that means it's time for you to vote for your choice. Go to [www.for-wild.org/members/photo.cgi](http://www.for-wild.org/members/photo.cgi), view the photos, and vote for your choice. Deadline for voting is October 5th.



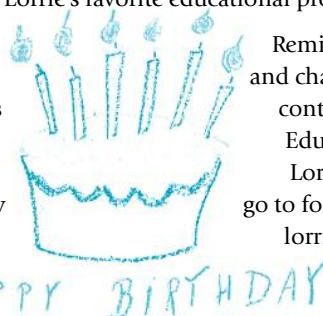
## Lorrie Otto's Birthday

*"Who among us would plant peonies or day lilies in our prairie restorations, yet no one seems to cringe when gardeners put liatris, pale purple cone flowers, and orange milkweed in their formal plantings, alongside their hostas. For me, it is like listening to music on an out-of-tune piano. If you don't know the song, it doesn't make any difference. But, if you do, then it jangles."* – From "On Being a Purist," by Lorrie Otto, June, 2009.

Read it all at [www.for-wild.org/people/otto/purist.html](http://www.for-wild.org/people/otto/purist.html).

Lorrie Otto is so important to Wild Ones and to the entire natural landscaping movement. Often referred to as the "godmother of the natural landscaping movement," and "Wild Ones' inspirational leader," it would be very hard to find any one person who did more to raise awareness of the important issues that are important to every one of us. With that in mind, we hope you will consider honoring Lorrie on her ninetieth birthday with a generous donation for Seeds for Education, Lorrie's favorite educational program.

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 ninety 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](http://for-wild.org/download/bd/lorriebirthday.html) to contribute and to download a special birthday card.

# MUTINY

All around the country, homeowners and even corporate headquarters are dumping their lawns, and replacing them with meadows, prairies, thickets, and forests.

By Craig Tufts



Mutiny is taking place in back yards across America, and more than one manicured lawn is being asked to walk the plank. Participants in this insurrection aren't some radical anti-turf revolutionaries. They're average law-abiding home owners who are realizing the benefits of natural landscapes

and the joys that come with gardening for wildlife.

These backyard naturalists are rejecting the fifties' approach of sterile and monocultural gardening, because they understand that their natural landscapes contribute positively to the overall quality of

the environment by improving air, water, and soil quality throughout the community – while providing much-needed wildlife habitat. Habitat restoration is critical for wildlife in urban and suburban settings where commercial and residential development has eliminated most natural areas.

The positive aspects of natural landscaping for both the individual property owner and the community far outweigh the occasional negative perceptions of those addicted to the traditional lawn. With the help of organizations like Wild Ones and the National Wildlife Federation, habitat enthusiasts are learning to make their landscapes more hospitable to wildlife, while building a haven for escaping the stresses of everyday life. Time spent surrounded by a more natural landscape gets people closer to nature and in touch with her real beauty. Children especially love secret spots in the garden where they can hide, think, get away from big people, and learn about the natural world in their own way, at their own pace.

These new gardens are nurtured by individuals who want to invite the natural world back into their lives – to see butterflies dance from flower to flower, frogs splash across a water garden, turtles sunbathe on rocks, and to hear the trill of songbirds fill the air. It's a way to connect with the natural world. And while occasionally an unwanted critter may venture in, the vast majority of wildlife species that are attracted to these refuges are welcomed.

By establishing a more natural landscape, environmentally conscious gardeners are endorsing the use of plants native to the soils and climate of an area. These plants provide the best overall food sources for wildlife, while requiring less fertilizer, less water, and less effort in controlling pests. Over time this translates to less cost to maintain a garden. Americans spend \$27 billion a year on lawn care – ten times more than we spend on school textbooks. The average lawn requires nine thousand gallons of water per week, and five to ten pounds of fertilizer per year – more than the entire country of India uses for its food crops. With natural landscaping many of these costs are weeded out. Best of all,

## CRAIG TUFTS (1946 - 2009)

Craig Tufts, 62, Chief Naturalist for the National Wildlife Federation for thirty-three years, who saw every back yard as a potential haven for wildlife, died June 21, 2009, at his home in Middleburg, Virginia. He had brain cancer.

Craig Ellery Tufts was born November 22, 1946, and raised in Brielle, along the central New Jersey shoreline, where his father owned a bait-and-tackle shop.

Growing up near New Jersey's Pine Barrens forest, he was exposed to nature as a boy, and recalled "an insatiable desire" to observe the coastal region's flora and fauna. In the foreword of a book to be published next year, he wrote, "For me, learning to know these new friends, what they did, how they grew and who ate them, became a lifelong process."

"It's somehow just good to know you're sharing your space with other living creatures," he said.

He wrote two books, *The Backyard Naturalist* (1988) and, with Peter Loewer, *The National Wildlife Federation's Guide to Gardening for Wildlife* (1995).

Craig was one of Wild Ones' original National Board members, and later became an Honorary Director, writing articles for the *Wild Ones Journal*, making speaker presentations, and being a source of education for all of us.

Because he was such an important part of our early history, the Wild Ones National Board is planning a memorial in his honor at the WILD Center. They're considering naming a woodland path in his memory. We'll keep you posted as we work out details. Please don't hesitate to share your ideas. Donations toward this memorial should be sent to Wild Ones Headquarters.



these landscapes demand less routine maintenance so people can spend more time enjoying and feeling connected to the wonders of nature. Simply stated, natural landscaping is designed to work with, rather than against nature.

Natural landscapes also provide people with a sense of place that distinguishes where they live from the rest of the world. Why for example, should a yard in Las Vegas look like one in New Orleans or Portland?

Ken Druse, author of *The Natural Habitat Garden*, says, "If even a fraction of America's thirty-eight million gardeners turned a quarter of their landscape into a wild garden (only one-tenth of an acre each), there would be a measurable impact – a tremendously positive gain for America's, and the world's, ecology."

Many people find their efforts to create a habitat not only rewarding, but fun for the whole family, and an inspiration to their neighbors. In fact, there are several communities where many residents have gone native and had their back yards certified.

It's not just homeowners who are jumping on this band wagon. Several large cor-

porations are also recognizing the benefits of natural landscaping, especially toward the bottom line. CIGNA is implementing several naturalistic cost-saving landscaping practices at its nearly six hundred sites across the country. At CIGNA headquarters, in Connecticut, the number of grounds-maintenance crew has been cut in half, and their annual landscaping budget has been reduced by \$400,000.

Conservation Design Forum, a Chicago-based firm, estimates that a mature native landscape can result in an annual maintenance cost saving of \$4,000 per acre, compared with a traditional turf landscape. That's good business in addition to the community good will companies can gain from demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship.

Laws that prosecute natural gardeners, commonly called weed laws, are gradually being overturned, as the benefits of these green oases are being acknowledged. Even the federal government has taken a supporting stand. In 1994 President Clinton recognized the natural landscaping movement by issuing an Executive Memorandum that not only recommended natural landscaping at all federal facilities and fed-

erally funded projects, but presented guidelines for doing so. The use of native plants around the Vice-Presidential mansion is one example of how the government is implementing this new mandate. (You can find details of Executive Order on Beneficial Landscaping, 13138, issued April 26, 1994, at [www.epa.gov/greenacres/memo.html](http://www.epa.gov/greenacres/memo.html).)

Lorrie Otto, a Milwaukee natural-landscaping activist who has been referred to as the "high priestess" of the natural landscape movement, makes the argument for natural landscapes best when she says, "If suburbia were landscaped with meadows, prairies, thickets, or forests, or combinations of these, then the water would sparkle, fish would be good to eat again, birds would sing, and human spirits would soar."

Educating people about how they can make a personal contribution to conservation efforts, and instilling a passion in them to make a difference, is key to the long-term health of our environment. Creating natural landscapes in your own backyard is often the first step people take toward a lifelong commitment to global environmental stewardship. \*

## WILD Center Entrance Gardens Taking Shape

Our thanks continue to go out to the many volunteers who have extended their hands and hearts to our efforts here at the WILD Center. The entrance gardens are now beginning to take shape and include another rain garden. We've used the new water pavers for our entrance path. H2O Pro Pavers allow rain to infiltrate through the full perimeter joints of each paver into specially designed sub-base materials, sustainably managing rainwater runoff. The pavers were installed by Wild Ones business member, **Lake Shore Cleaners**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter. Watch for an article about the pavers in a future issue of the *Journal*.

If you're in the area, and want to lend a hand, don't hesitate to stop over. We'll put you to work. It'll be a worthwhile effort. And we usually have food and liquid refreshments on-site.



# I See Green

By Barb Bray

*I see green. What is green?*

*A field is green. A tree is green.*

*The pod that holds a pea is green.*

This rhyme comes from *My Color Game*, a book written by Evelyn Begley – and it is a book I have read many times to my children. Whenever I read this book, it evokes colorful images of purple hills, yellow lemons, orange pumpkins, and more.

What would the world be without colors? Living in a northern state, winter sometimes feels like a colorless world for months on end. Anxiously, we Michiganders await the first sign of spring: Green! Ah! Green is so wonderful after several months of white.

We rejoice when we see the first blades of grass emerging from our brown lawns. We marvel at the fattening buds on the cottonwood trees. Then suddenly, almost magically, every shrub, tree, and plant is completely draped in green leaves.

In many ways green is a “magical” color. Without the green substance called chlorophyll, plants couldn’t use the sun’s energy to combine water and carbon dioxide to make sugar. Sugar, of course, is food for the plant.

Chlorophyll is a special chemical substance with unique properties. Try this fun, easy experiment extracting chlorophyll from a leaf:

I used a leaf from a silver maple in my yard, but you can use any leaf as long as it is healthy and green. Adult supervision is required for this experiment. First, soak your leaf in boiling water for five minutes. Next, take the leaf out of the water and place it in a small glass jar. Add enough rubbing alcohol (isopropyl alcohol) to cover the leaf. Set the glass jar in a container of hot water to keep it warm. After an hour, check the jar. The color of the alcohol should be green from the chlorophyll, while the leaf’s color has faded to a pale green.

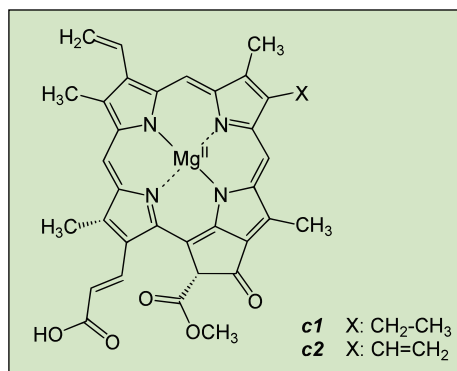
Inside plant cells, the chlorophyll occupies small bean-shaped structures called chloroplasts. The rubbing alcohol used in the experiment breaks down the walls of the chloroplasts which leak chlorophyll into the alcohol. Chlorophyll is what makes leaves look green. The color of an object, like a leaf, depends on the light it reflects



back to our eyes. Chlorophyll is good at absorbing red and blue light, but reflects back green light.

We can explore some of the photo-receptive properties of chlorophyll by looking at it in the dark. Take your sample into a dark room, and using a bright flashlight, shine it on the extracted chlorophyll. What color(s) do you see? Chlorophyll can absorb some wavelengths of light and reflect others. When it is removed from a plant, the chlorophyll reflects, or fluoresces, red light energy. Inside the plant, the red wavelengths of light are absorbed. Can you see reflected red light in your sample?

In the fall, as daylight dwindles, photosynthesis slows down and then stops. The chlorophyll slowly fades away and reveals other colors in the leaves. Eventually the leaves are shed as winter sets in. Chlorophyll and its “magical” green color are just a memory, until once again, spring bursts upon us. \*



Chlorophyll. Copyright Yikrazuul.



*Our interactions with the “Next Generation” of children can sometimes be like snapshots. It feels good to think that one has accomplished something. In a small way each such interaction is a momentary privilege. We hope the child remembers. When we look back on our own childhood memories we realize that some of these moments do in fact have an impact.*

## Sunlight

By Maryann Whitman

We stand side by side, leaning on the rail fence like two weathered farmers, he probably ten, I – somewhat older. We’re contemplating a sputtering little fountain in an “outdoor classroom” – a native-plant garden that had been planted that spring in a corner of his school yard.

“Kind of pitiful isn’t it?” he observes.

“Not if you consider where it’s getting its power,” I respond.

“See that tube coming out of the wall?” He points “I watched the electrician when he brought electricity out of the school, so there could be lights. There’s probably an underground wire to the fountain,” he eagerly explains. He’s pleased to have an answer to my puzzle.

I look at him, a grin forming, hinting that I know another answer, and slowly shake my head, meaning “No.”

He frowns, then his face lights up as he thinks of the answer. “There’s a battery, I bet!”

I continue wagging my head. “I’ll give you a hint,” I offer. “See how the water only shoots up now and then? Now look at the sun – see how it’s behind the cloud every time the water stops sputtering?”

He frowns again, thinking. Then his eyes open wide. “Whoa, you’ve got to be kidding. I’ve heard of those...those sun things.” He lacks the words.

I congratulate him with a nod. “Yup, it’s a solar-run unit. That little black panel at the base of the fountain captures the sunlight and converts it to power to run the water pump. That’s something like what all these wildflowers are doing – they’re catching the sunlight and using it to make energy to grow.”

“Cool.” He thoughtfully draws out the “oo.”

I couldn’t have said it better myself. \*



# MULTIFLORA ROSE (*ROSA MULTIFLORA*)

By Janet Allen

## INVASIVES ON THE HORIZON

Multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) was introduced to this country from eastern Asia in the eighteen-sixties as a rootstock for ornamental roses, but it also came to be used for conservation planting, and even to create living fences. The "living fence" idea was promoted for urban sites as well.

As a teenage gardener, I succumbed to the ads, and persuaded my parents to let me plant a "fence" of these stout, thorny roses. (It probably seemed like a pretty tame request in the sixties.) It was easy to grow, and had few insect or disease problems. Its ten-foot height would provide privacy, and its twenty-foot width meant we'd have to purchase only a few plants. It had fragrant, white flowers, too. What more could you want?

At the time I was more interested in flowers than in providing habitat for wildlife, but many people planted multiflora rose to benefit wildlife. It provided rose hips for birds and other animals, pollen for bees, and nesting sites for birds (though now there are indications that nest predation on these sites may be higher). In fact, from the nineteen-thirties to the nineteen-sixties many states planted them in large numbers (twenty million in North Carolina alone) for their habitat qualities and for erosion control.

But multiflora rose has now invaded much of the United States. It's not fussy as to growing conditions, and so it's found in dense woods, in prairies, along stream banks and roadsides, and in open fields and pastures.

I don't know the fate of the roses in my fence, since we moved just a few years after I planted them, but if they survived, they probably caused the same problems they've caused elsewhere. They form impenetrable thickets. Their canes climb into trees, weighing them down. They crowd out native plants, and slow forest regeneration.



Fringed stipule at each leaf base identifies *R. multiflora*. Photo courtesy of Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org.

My fence was on the border between two residential properties, so it probably wasn't allowed to spread vegetatively as it does in the wild. It's likely, though, to have spread by seed – a single mature plant can produce up to a million seeds a year. Birds eat the rose hips, fly miles away, then deposit the seeds, complete with their built-in packet of fertilizer. In fact, when the seeds pass through the digestive tract of songbirds, it actually increases the germination rate. Deer and other animals similarly contribute to its spread.

Multiflora rose can be removed by chemical or mechanical means. Pulling the plant out can be effective if you carefully remove all the roots. Frequent, repeated

cutting or mowing close to the ground six times a year for two to four years can also work. But since most of the seeds remain viable for years, getting rid of an established plant is not the end of the task. The seed bank can continue to produce seedlings for at least twenty years, so continued vigilance is needed. Some help may be on the way.

"Rose-rosette disease" is a natural control that may eventually help decrease the population of multiflora rose. This native virus is spreading eastward, and multiflora rose seems to be easily infected.

### Other naturalized roses

Multiflora rose isn't the only non-native invasive rose. "Wild" roses such as rugosa "beach" roses (*R. rugosa*) or Cherokee roses (*R. laevigata*) are often considered natives, but they're from Asia, too. Oddly, the Asian Cherokee rose was even selected as the state flower of Georgia. They've been here so long they seem familiar, but they're also problematic – rugosa roses along the coast, and Cherokee roses in southern forests.

Even so, it doesn't take long to find web sites that recommend them. For example, one Florida gardening web site recommends Cherokee rose, calling it "...a useful addition to natural areas where it will shoot long arching stems that will string themselves vinelike through tree branches and shrubs."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

### WHAT ABOUT THE BIRDS?

Even though multiflora rose is widely acknowledged to be invasive, some people are reluctant to eradicate a plant that attracts birds. It's hard to fault people for wanting to provide habitat for birds, but in *Planting Noah's Garden*, Sara Stein, a former honorary director of Wild Ones, helps people consider the bigger picture:

"Sorry, birders: I must now hit this nerve. The fact that a plant feeds birds does not vindicate its use. It is true that without the northward spread of multiflora roses, we Yankees would not enjoy the song of mockingbirds on moonlit nights. But if those rose hips enable one bird to make it through our northern winters, the meadows that might otherwise flourish where multifloras have invaded would support many more bird species on the myriad insects they provide in spring and summer, the variety of the grains and flower seeds they offer in the winter, and the rodent diet they serve up throughout the year. One slaps the label 'weed' on a species, not because it is without virtue, but because whatever virtues that plant may have cannot outweigh the countless virtues of the entire habitat it displaces."

# Dogwood Trees: Beyond the bird feeder. Gardening for Birds and Other Wildlife.

By Mariette Nowak

There are three species of native dogwood trees found in the United States and southern Canada, all of which have outstanding value for landscaping, as well as for birds and wildlife. The pagoda or alternate-leaved dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*) is found throughout much of the eastern half of North America, from Newfoundland to northern Florida. The flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) has a somewhat more southerly range, from Maine and Ontario to northeastern Mexico. Western North America has its own species, the Pacific or mountain dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*), found contiguously from British Columbia to central California, with a disjunct population, separated by mountains, in Idaho. (In addition to these trees, there are many species of dogwood shrubs.)

## Value for Birds

Dogwood berries ripen from summer to fall, depending on the species, and are a magnet for birds. High in fat, the berries are especially valuable for migrating birds, which need to build up the subcutaneous fats required to fuel their rigorous journeys south each fall. Flowering dogwood berries, for example, have twenty-four percent fat content – significantly higher than some other fall fruits such as hawthorn berries which have only six percent fat.

Among the forty-three species of birds that have been documented feeding on dogwood berries, in a study published in 1951 (Martin et al, *American Wildlife & Plants*), the evening grosbeak was the champion, depending on the berries for twenty-five to fifty percent of its diet. Other species enjoying the berries included wood ducks, grouse, turkeys, and many songbirds.

The dogwood trees are also useful as shelter and nesting sites for birds throughout the growing season.

## Value for Other Wildlife

Dogwoods are a host plant for caterpillars of the beautiful little blue butterfly, the spring azure, which is found from Alaska east across Canada and throughout the U.S. to the mountains of Mexico and Panama. The berries are eaten by many mammals, ranging from moose to rabbits.

## Landscaping Notes

The flowering dogwood is outstanding in its beauty, “the tree that elevates the clan to horticultural aristocracy,” as author William Cullina writes. The Pacific dogwood is the west coast version of the flowering dogwood, and is equally showy. Both have large white bracts surrounding a bouquet of the minute flowers, which sug-

*Dogwood berries ripen from summer to fall, depending on the species, and are a magnet for birds.*

gest one big blossom. The flowering dogwood has four such bracts, while the Pacific has five or six bracts.

Both, unfortunately, are susceptible to the dogwood blight, caused by an anthracnose fungus. The disease has killed many wild trees of both species. However, the flowering dogwood can do well as a landscape tree if it has moist soil, with some light and air around the crown. The Pacific dogwood is difficult to grow, according to most sources.

The pagoda dogwood has more modest flowers lacking the large bracts of the other



Characteristic “alligator-skin” bark of flowering dogwood. © 2002 Steven J. Baskauf.

two species, but its tiered branching gives it a beautiful form resembling an oriental pagoda. Its beauty peaks in the fall, when its blue berries ripen on scarlet stalks, surrounded by yellow or scarlet foliage. Fortunately, it is much hardier than the other two species and is not subject to dogwood blight, but may be affected some years by powdery mildew.

## Also of interest

The name dogwood comes from “dag-wood” because of its use for making “dags” or daggers. Native Americans used the inner bark to treat malaria, and its young shoots for basket making.

Through the last few centuries, the wood has been used widely for golf clubs, loom shuttles, tool handles, knitting needles, barrel hoops, wheel hubs, sledge runners, piano keys and many other items requiring a hard, strong wood. \*

## ECOSCAPER



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





# Invasives Revisited: The Bradford Pear

By Janice Cook



Fruit of the Bradford pear (*Pyrus calleryana*). © 2004 Steven J. Baskauf.

Many of us have become familiar with plants that have made the transition from being a horticultural species, to gradually naturalizing, to becoming invasive. The transition can take years or decades, depending on natural genetic changes. Small changes as the plant settles into the new environment naturally enable adaptations that let the plants thrive in new situations on their own.

New studies on the Bradford pear indicate a much more complex route to becoming invasive, with some human assistance along the way. And, yes, it is *that* Bradford pear, the sterile one with the beautiful white blossoms.

*Pyrus calleryana* stock was brought to the United States in 1910, from China. The root stock was widely used when fire blight disease began destroying pear orchards. The root stock was resistant to the disease, and was widely cloned. Further experiments led to the development of the Bradford pear, which was sold as an ornamental, beginning in the early nineteen-sixties. The tree was a commercial success. Sterile, beautiful, available.

The sterility mechanism was genetically built in, so to speak. The plants were bred to be incapable of self-pollination. Since all the trees in production were clones of the same root stock, all pollen was recog-

nized as "self" produced, and therefore impotent.

However, the commercial success of the tree led to the development of new cultivars. These cultivars introduced enough genetic variability that the security gate recognition no longer worked. The tree recognized the pollen as "other" produced, and permitted pollination to occur. Some of the trees began to bear edible, marble-sized fruit. The fruit was readily eaten by, and therefore, distributed, by animals. The seed successfully sprouted and grew more unsecured trees.

The studies that were done by Theresa Culley, of the University of Cincinnati, and Nicole Hartman, are reported in the May issue of *Biological Invasions* and the May 9th issue of *Science News*. Their studies show that many cross-variety strains have developed with hybrid crosses, cultivar crosses, or hybrid cultivar crosses. Some varieties have developed thorns, most crosses are fertile and bear fruit.

Thickets of the new varieties of pear trees can be found in Ohio, Tennessee, and Maryland. The trees have made the list of thirty-five species that have crossed over into the invasive category.

It leaves me thinking of the Ray Bradbury story title, "Something Wicked this Way Comes." \*

## 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](http://www.for-wild.org/joining.html).

Go there now.



**The Wild Ones Legacy Program** is now two years old, and we are pleased that so many of our Wild Ones members have embraced its concept. We have twenty-eight Lifetime Members, eight known Burr Oak Members, and to-date one hundred thirty-six known members in our Oak Savanna Circle. Congratulations! And thank you, everyone.

To fund its important programs, Wild Ones depends heavily on private contributions from caring individuals. Donors are discovering the benefits of supporting charities through their estate plans. Through the **Wild Ones Legacy Program** we will work with you and your estate-planning professionals to help you help Wild Ones after you are gone.

These donations (often called planned gifts) can offer many advantages:

- Reduce estate taxes.
- Provide a life-income stream.
- Allow you to make a much larger gift than you thought possible.
- Receive a current income-tax deduction.
- Reduce or avoid capital gains tax.
- Support Wild Ones mission and work.

If you have not yet included the Wild Ones in your estate plans, the following are some

of the most popular methods to accomplish that. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact National Treasurer, Bret Rappaport, at 312-845-5116 or b.rappaport@comcast.net, or the Wild Ones National Office at 877-394-9453 or [execdirector@for-wild.org](mailto:execdirector@for-wild.org).

#### **Wills**

One of the simplest and most common ways to remember Wild Ones and help us carry on our mission is to leave a bequest through your will. The following is suggested language to use in wills and a variety of other estate planning tools – feel free to print this and take it to your attorney when you are discussing your estate plans.

#### **When making a gift to the Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd., use this language:**

"I give and bequeath the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (or \_\_\_\_\_% of my estate) to the Wild Ones Natural Landscapers Ltd., to be used for its general purposes."

You may also give a particular asset ("my shares of XYZ stock...") or a portion of the residue of your estate after other bequests have been paid ("50% of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate...").

#### **Trusts**

There are many different types of trusts that can serve a variety of purposes. It would be impossible to give even a brief explanation of the many types of trusts in this information. The advice of an attorney and qualified financial planner is necessary to assess your situation and decide which trust might best serve your goals. Please know, however that it is easy to include a gift to Wild Ones through your trust by using the language set forth above.

Also, there are trusts (called Charitable Remainder Trusts) that can provide you or your loved ones with a life-income stream while also providing a gift to support the programs of the Wild Ones. Please check with your financial advisor to determine what is best for your situation.

#### **Life insurance**

Life insurance can be a valuable tool in estate planning. By naming beneficiaries on policies, the proceeds can be paid directly to that person or organization without having to go through probate. Life insurance also offers a wonderful way to make a charitable gift. It is possible to make gifts with "paid-up" policies, policies with premiums still due,



policies where you can retain the right to a policy's cash value, or by assigning the dividends in a participating policy. Check with your insurance agent to see which option would be best for you.

#### **Pay on death or transfer on death accounts**

This estate planning tool can be an effective way to quickly transfer assets – such as bank accounts – to a beneficiary, because it avoids that asset going through the probate process. It also allows you to change the beneficiary at any time.

When establishing the account, tell your banking representative that you wish it to be a “Pay on Death” account. They will ask you for the name of the person or charitable organization you wish to receive the property upon your death.

#### **Gifts of securities**

While a gift of securities is not strictly an estate-planning tool, there are significant advantages to this type of donation that have allowed many donors to make gifts that will live on after they are gone.

If you have owned stock for at least one year that has increased in value, you can donate that stock to a charitable organization without having to pay capital-gains tax on the increase. Additionally there is an income-tax charitable deduction equal to the full current market value of the securities (up to 30 percent of the donor's adjusted gross income). Using appreciated stock to fund a gift annuity offers added tax benefits to that gift.

Note: In order to receive the most favorable tax treatment, you must donate the securities to the Wild Ones – you cannot sell the stock and donate the proceeds. If you would like more information on how to make this transfer, please contact the Wild Ones National Office.

#### **Retirement plan assets**

With the increase in the variety of retirement plan assets that people own, an important aspect of your estate planning should be making sure that the money invested in these accounts goes to the people or organizations you wish to receive them.

Examples of these different retirement plans include IRAs, pension plans, Keogh, and 401(K) accounts. If you are contemplating a charitable gift in your estate plans, using assets such as those in retirement plans can maximize your donation while allowing other property that is not subject to some taxes to be passed to your beneficiaries. Consult your financial advisor to see what is best for your particular estate plan. \*

# GET WILD STAY WILD

## *How You Can Help Support Our Mission*



There are many ways you can help Wild Ones promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities – including financial support or volunteering your time. You can choose to provide additional support in various ways. Which of these might work for you?

#### **Annual Support**

Annual gifts, in addition to membership fees, provide critical ongoing resources to support daily operations and enable Wild Ones to carry out its mission throughout the year. **Wild Ones Stewards** provide dependable income for Wild Ones programs by making their annual gifts through convenient monthly deductions via credit card or direct debit from a designated financial account. Any amount is greatly appreciated.

#### **Burr Oak Circle**

Donors who make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more are honored through this leadership circle program, and are provided with special benefits such as special viewing days at the soon-to-be Wild Ones headquarters and a 10 percent discount on items at the Wild Store.

#### **Oak Savanna Circle**

Members of this circle have loyally supported Wild Ones for at least 10 years or more.

#### **Employee Matching Gift Program**

Many companies and organizations match employee contributions, greatly increasing the impact of a charitable gift to Wild Ones. Please contact your human resources office for further information.

#### **Special Gifts and Heritage**

Contact the Wild Ones Executive Director for further information about the **Wild Ones Legacy Program** which includes making gifts of appreciated stock, real property, in-kind gifts, IRA-rollover gifts (option through December 2007 per the Pension Protection Act of 2006), and multi-year commitments. The Legacy Program (see opposite page) also can include bequests, charitable gift annuities, trusts, and other planned giving vehicles which provide significant support to Wild Ones while also benefiting the donors and their families.

#### **Volunteer**

More than 4,000 people annually volunteer their time and energy for land conservation, community garden plantings, and other chapter and national Wild Ones activities. Please consider becoming a “plants-roots” partner with Wild Ones.

#### **Lifetime Members**

Lifetime members have shown a long-term commitment to the Wild Ones mission and its goals.

#### **Gift Memberships**

One of the easiest ways to advocate and help others who are not already Wild Ones members learn about the benefits of using native plants in their landscaping is to give them a gift membership.

For more information on supporting Wild Ones, contact Donna VanBuecken, Executive Director, Wild Ones, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912-1274, 877-394-9453 (toll free), [execdirector@for-wild.org](mailto:execdirector@for-wild.org), or visit our web site at [www.for-wild.org/](http://www.for-wild.org/). \*

# Wild Ones BUSINESS MEMBERS

## NEW BUSINESS MEMBERS

### Forrest Keeling Nursery

88 Forrest Keeling La  
Elsberry MO 63343  
(800) 356-2401  
info@fknurey.com  
www.fknursery.com

### Ground Work

8716 Arcturus Drive  
Cincinnati OH 25249-3504  
(513) 530-0949  
groundwork@fuse.net

### Half Price Books

8514 W Brown Deer Rd  
Milwaukee WI 53224  
(414) 354-1235

### Half Price Books

5032 S 74th St  
Greenfield WI 53220  
(414) 280-0000

### Ohio Prairie Nursery

PO Box 174  
Hiram OH 44234-0174  
(330) 569-3380  
info@ohioprairienursery.com  
www.ohioprairienursery.com

## RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

### Ecovirons

PO Box 520  
Chireno TX 75937-0520  
(936) 362-2215  
cyrilla@inu.net  
www.ecovirons.com

### Landmark Landscapes Inc

W3923 County Rd O  
Sheboygan Falls WI 53085  
(920) 467-6442  
joe@landmarklandscapesinc.com  
www.landmarklandscapesinc.com

### ONE Plus Inc

113 West Main Street  
Sun Prairie WI 53590-2905  
(608) 837-8022  
oneplus@chorus.net  
www.oneplusarchitecture.com



# Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

## Dear Deer: Please Go Away. Eat Somewhere Else Another Day

If you're having problems with deer eating your plants, here are some ideas that might help.

### Deer Repellent Idea #1

From **Rochelle Whiteman** of the **Milwaukee North (WI) Chapter**.

I have found this method to deal with deer in my garden: Wearing rubber gloves, try mixing a little bit of Tangle Foot (very sticky – available at lawn and garden stores) with a little dried blood (purchased in a bag), with a bit of hair (from the barber's floor). I spread a tiny bit of it on my giant Solomon seal leaves, at the tip of the top of the tallest ones – and they are protected. This year I didn't do it, and the deer found them. I realize that in some instances a spray would work better for some plants, but the Tangle Foot does not wash off, and it lasts.



### Deer Repellent Idea #2

From one of our advertisers, **Monches Farm**, a Wisconsin-based native-plant nursery (see their ad on page 19), here's a non-commercial deer repellent made with ingredients most of us have in our own kitchens. Shared by one of their customers, they've tried it there on the Farm, and their experience so far has been very positive:

1 Egg

1/2 cup Milk

1 Tbsp. Oil (we use Hot Chili Oil, but regular vegetable oil can also be used)

1 Tbsp. Dish Soap

Mix ingredients in gallon of jug of water (we use our empty milk gallons). Allow to "ferment" for several days or weeks. Filter out large sediment, and apply with sprayer. \*

## INVASIVES ON THE HORIZON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

### What to plant instead

Native roses are an attractive alternative.

They're pest-resistant and much easier to care for than are hybrids. They also provide good habitat:



Pollen for bees, nesting places for birds, fruit for wildlife, and seclusion for small mammals. Their flowers have five single petals in some shade of pink, and they usually bloom only once in late spring or early summer.

A few of the more common native roses are pasture rose (*R. carolina*), Virginia rose (*R. virginiana*), swamp rose (*R. palustris*), and Arkansas rose (*R. arkansana*). There's even a climbing rose – the climbing pasture rose (*R. setigera*).

Today, I don't have a "living fence," but I do have pasture rose incorporated into my hedge row. I got it from my mother's garden a few years ago when I started looking at this simple flower with new appreciation. It was one of the few plants she had brought with her from our old house...the house whose yard I had "improved" by planting multiflora rose. \*

# FOREVER WILD

## Congratulations to Our Newest Lifetime Members

**Christopher & Martina Mann**

Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr  
Chapter

*Thank you for your support and your  
dedication to Wild Ones.*

★★★★★★★

### You Can Be a Lifetime Member

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 life-time members. One address per membership.

**Contact the National Office,  
toll-free at 877-3944-9453  
for details.**



SATURDAY, OCT. 17, 2009

# WILD ONES

PRESENTS

## NATURAL LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS



MAKE YOUR YARD  
AN ENCHANTING PLACE

Wild Ones is  
celebrating 30 years  
of environmental  
education in 2009.

Come join us for our  
annual celebration!

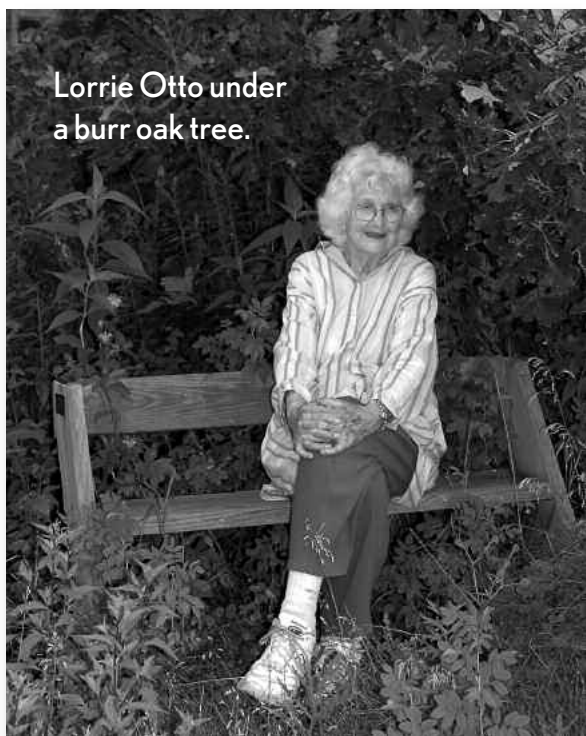
LANDSCAPING  
SEMINAR

QUARTERLY  
BOARD MEETING

STRATEGY PLANNING  
MEETING

VISITS TO LOCAL  
NATURALLY  
LANDSCAPED YARDS





Lorrie Otto under  
a burr oak tree.

# WILD ONES

PRESENTS

## NATURAL LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

OCT. 17, 2009

Register using the form below or on line at [www.for-wild.org/conf](http://www.for-wild.org/conf)

For questions, call (414) 299-9888, x3

All attendees are free to choose from two tracks during four session intervals.

CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY  
6801 N. YATES ROAD, MILWAUKEE, WIS.  
KLIEBHAN CONFERENCE CENTER  
BONAVENTURE HALL

8:30 A.M.-3:30 P.M.

CHECK-IN STARTS AT 7:30 A.M.

\$25 IN ADVANCE • \$30 AT THE DOOR • \$15 STUDENTS WITH ID

No credit cards, please

**PLEASE REGISTER BY OCTOBER 10**

This seminar was originally conceived and is sponsored by Lorrie Otto, formerly of Bayside, Wis., the inspiration for Wild Ones and widely acknowledged as the heart and soul of the natural landscaping movement.

The seminar is hosted by the  
Milwaukee County chapters of Wild Ones.

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

(to receive registration confirmation)

Number of persons ..... x \$25 = \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students ..... x \$15 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total = \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION**

Pick up program materials at the check-in table  
the morning of the seminar starting at 7:30 a.m.

Make checks payable to: Wild Ones  
c/o Pat Brust, 9411 S. 92nd Street  
Franklin, WI 53132 • (414) 299-9888, x3



## GREAT BEGINNINGS

7:30-8:30 **CHECK-IN.** To avoid disposable waste, bring your own mug for coffee.

### 8:30-9:45 OUR YARD

**The Process of Planning and Creating Our Native Planting** presented by **Lon and Susannah Roesselet**, members of Wild Ones, Milwaukee North and mentored by Lorrie Otto.

## ... AND MORE

### 8:30-9:45 STARTING YOUR OWN

**How to Propagate Native Plants from Seed or Division** presented by **Wendy Walcott**, formerly with Prairie Future Seed Company and former Land Steward of the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center.

### 9:45-10:15 BREAK: Visit Our Vendors

*Have a snack, ask some questions and do a little shopping during your break between sessions.*

*With more than a dozen vendors, you're bound to find something wonderful to take home.*

*Both private businesses and non-profit groups will be on hand to support your excitement for natural landscaping.*

*Buy seeds for yourself or handmade soaps or lotion as gifts. Get to know one of the landscape architects who "speaks native."*

*Thank you for supporting those vendors who contribute to the value of this Wild Ones' conference.*

### 10:15-11:30 STILL LEARNING AFTER 20 YEARS

**Gardens of Patience, Lessons, Surprises and Joy** presented by **Nancy Aten**, landscape architect and environmental consultant.

### 10:15-11:30 PLANTS, POLLINATORS, PEOPLE

**Making the Connection** presented by **Randy Powers**, owner Prairie Future Seed Company.

## 11:30-12:45 LUNCH

Join us for the Wild Ones National Annual meeting.

Bring a bag lunch to enjoy during the meeting or have lunch in the university cafeteria.

### 12:45-2:00 A WILD JOURNEY

**1981-2009** presented by **LuAnn Thompson**, a Wild One for almost 30 years, LuAnn is a member of the Milwaukee Southwest chapter.

### 12:45-2:00 THE MISSING LINK

**The Transition from Canopy to Ground: The Ecology, Culture and Use of Shrubs and Small Trees** presented by **John Harrington**, professor of Landscape Architecture, UW-Madison.

## 2:00-2:15 BREAK

### 2:15-3:30 GETTING STARTED

**Making Time Work for You** presented by **Joy Buslaff**, publication designer, contributor to Wild Ones Handbook.

### 2:15-3:30 UPDATE ON INVASIVE PLANT ISSUES

**New Laws, New Invaders, New Controls, New Opportunities** presented by **Kelly Kearns**, plant conservation manager, Wisconsin DNR.



## ACCOMMODATIONS



**1 Four Points by Sheraton**  
Milwaukee North  
8900 North Kildeer Court  
Brown Deer, WI 53209  
414-355-8585  
888-627-8238  
Room rate: \$80  
www.fourpointsmilwaukee.com



**2 Radisson North Shore**  
7065 N Port Washington Rd  
Glendale WI 53217  
414-351-6960  
800-333-3333  
Room Rate: \$89  
www.radisson.com/milwaukee\_north

Special room rates are available through October 10, but rooms are limited so make your reservations as early as possible. Tell the reservation staff you are attending the Wild Ones conference.

## EXTRA EVENTS



**3 Friday, Oct. 16, 4-7 p.m.**  
**Mequon Nature Preserve**  
**4th quarterly national meeting.**  
Sponsored by Milwaukee SW Chapter.



**Saturday, Oct. 17**  
**11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

**Cardinal Stritch University**  
**14th Annual National Meeting.**

Hosted by Milwaukee area chapters of Wild Ones. Bring a lunch and join the discussion.



**3 Saturday, Oct. 17, 5-9 p.m.**  
**Mequon Nature Preserve**  
**Strategy Planning Update.**

Meal arrangements pending. If you dine with us during the meeting, a donation would be appreciated.

**Sunday, Oct. 18, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**  
**Yard Tour**

Self-guided tour of local naturally landscaped yards. Maps will be provided with seminar registration materials.

## ANNUAL MEETING

**11:45 a.m.** • Donna VanBuecken, executive director: Welcome and comments about the conference.

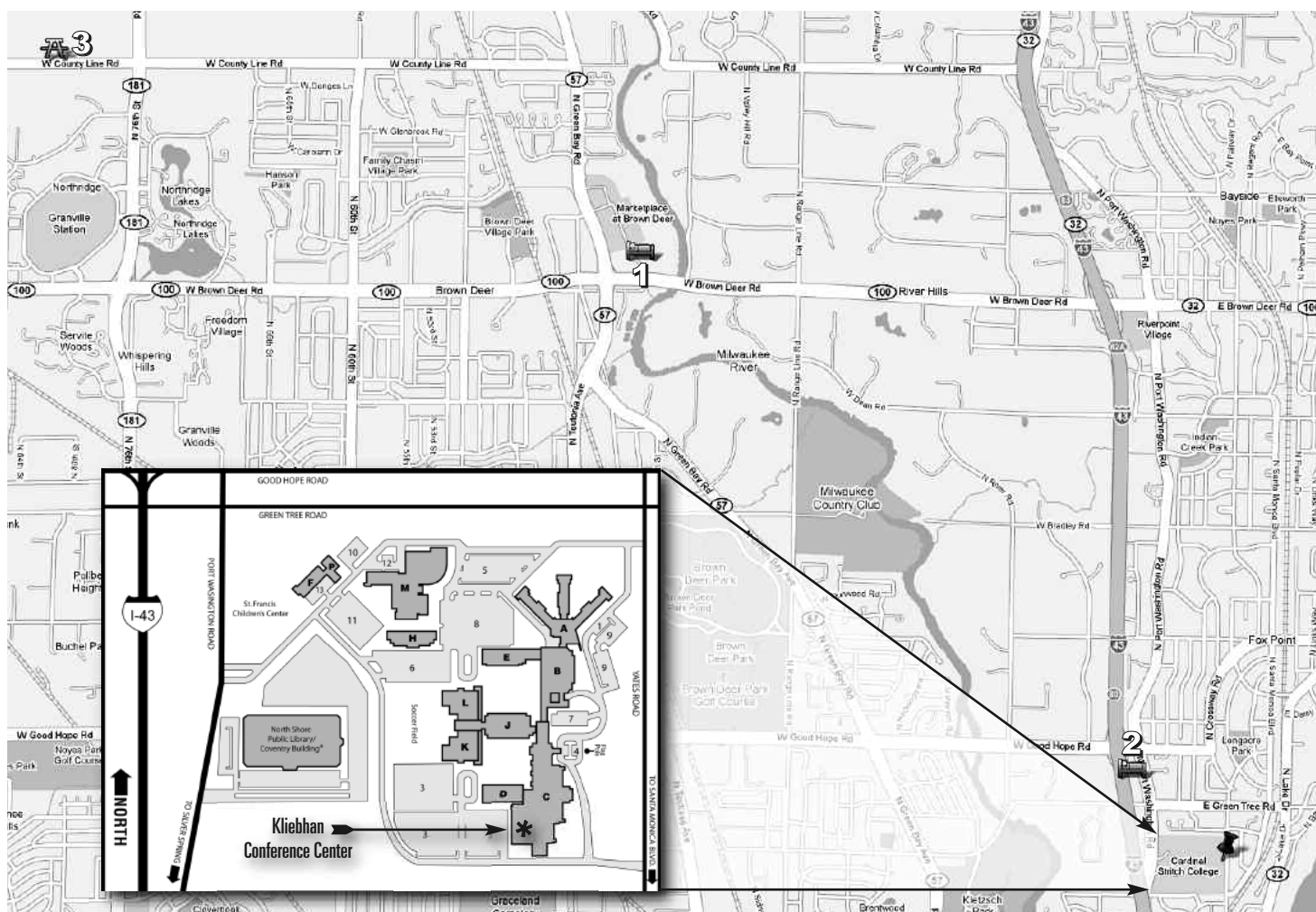
**11:50 a.m.** • Joe Powelka, outgoing secretary: Reading and approval of 8/23/2008 meeting minutes.

**11:55 a.m.** • Carol Andrews, president: Introduction of new national board officers, citations of merit, state of the organization, Wild Ones HQ, Craig Tufts memorial, photo contest, national committees, strategy planning meeting.

**12:15 p.m.** • Marty Rice, treasurer: Finance report.

**12:20 p.m.** • Donna VanBuecken: Membership report – business member program and chapter health, not-for-profit membership, new-member drive.

**12:30-12:45 p.m.** • Carol Andrews: Q&A and adjournment.





at establishing native plantings in small-scale urban settings have not gone well, often resulting in overgrown, weedy, and generally unattractive flowerbeds.

These failed plantings give native landscaping a bad name, and set back other efforts to use native plants in urban landscapes by providing “nay-sayers” an excuse to promote mowed grass and traditional landscaping. This is especially unfortunate

because not only are native plantings low input, and lead to better soil and water quality, they also provide much-needed habitat for native birds, butterflies, pollinators, and other animals.

Many things can and do go wrong with native landscaping projects. As part of my native-landscaping consulting business I have spent a considerable amount of time deciphering what went wrong in failed sites. Here are a few of my observations.

### Site Preparation and Design

*The site is not properly readied for planting:* A couple applications of herbicide and/or tilling won't kill brome, crown vetch, red clover, and many other species that are problematic if present in a native planting. Time spent monitoring the re-appearance of problem species after herbicide treatment, prior to planting, is critical to success.

*Inexperienced site designers:* Many standard landscape designers will specify a native seeding or planting with no basic knowledge, and often with no direct personal experience, related to what it takes to establish a native-species flowerbed or prairie planting. These sites are usually doomed from the outset – by the time someone realizes things have gone awry, the site is a weedy mess (quite possibly including undesirable native species) that would be an enormous, if not impossible job to correct. Additionally, inappropriate species mixes are often selected by inexperienced designers (see “Plant Selection Problems”). A good way to “weed out” inexperienced designers is to request photos of their successful (year three or older) native-landscaping projects.

*Design Issues 1:* In some cases the reputation for ruggedness attributed to native species can be a detriment. While it is true



The dominant flowers in this bed, in late May, are prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*) and wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*). The “smoke” (elongated styles) aspect is visible in the plants in the lower left of this photo.

many native plants can withstand remarkably harsh environmental conditions, they nevertheless do require a specific set of growth parameters. Conditions created in some engineered sites (e.g., biocells, rain gardens) are not typical of a natural system, and may not support some species that would thrive in the same locale if in a natural soil system. In particular, soils engineered to drain rapidly

may be too dry for even a drought-adapted prairie species if there is a prolonged summer hot/dry spell, and too wet for the same species if there is a prolonged cool/wet spring. Similarly, underground rock chambers connected to storm drains may freeze at depths not experienced in a natural soil system and negatively affect the root system of the plants growing above. These engineered systems are still quite new and need to be evaluated for plant survival on an ongoing basis.

*Design Issue 2:* Each site is different (shade, slope, soil, etc.), and must be designed to fit site conditions. The most obvious variables are distribution of sun/shade, and availability of moisture. Attempts to use a one-size-fits-all approach to native plantings are generally not successful, particularly when it comes to species selection. Plants need to be carefully selected to suit the environmental conditions and size of each bed.

### Plant selection problems

*Plants are too tall:* It's essential to stick with shorter plants in small plantings. (See a list of my recommendations by height: [http://prrcd.org/inl/recommended\\_plants.htm](http://prrcd.org/inl/recommended_plants.htm).) Sometimes even people who know natural areas well don't realize how big the native species are relative to typical landscape plants – establishing small prairie beds is not a case of just using the same mix of species found in “real” prairies. Many – actually, most – commonly available prairie species get five or more feet tall, and even four-feet tall is getting pretty big in a small flowerbed. (See a link to my lists of recommended prairie species sorted by height and sun exposure at the end of this article). Also, plant species are often described with a height range, so it's important to use the maximum height when deciding on suitability. This is particularly relevant if you

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



are converting a traditionally tended flower bed to native open-field plants – the soil will be extravagantly rich.

Native species in a new flower-bed often reach or exceed their maximum described height, due to lack of competition for root space and nutrients. Once the bed fills in, and as competitive conditions develop, the plants will grow to a more typical height.

#### *Wrong seed mix:*

A custom seed mix developed

specifically for a site is always preferable, as it can be tailored to the site conditions and goals of the landowner. A custom seed mix enables you to avoid these pitfalls:

- A seed mix that is designed for a large scale will include plants that are overly tall, rank, and often not selected for attractiveness.
- A mix designed for a specific water regime being put in the wrong place, so the only species that survive long term are the weedy component of the mix.
- Seed mixes labeled “wildflower” or “meadow” that often look great the first year, but contain non-native species that quickly die out, leaving the more weedy, and often unattractive, species behind.

*Species substitutions may happen:* When plant materials are ordered, substitutions must be carefully monitored. Another species in the same genus may seem like a reasonable substitute, but often this is not the case. If the person placing the order is not familiar with native species, care should be taken that, if necessary, assistance is sought in selecting appropriate substitute species.

*Sun exposure not accounted for:* Most prairie species do not do well in shade, but variations in the light regime on a specific site are frequently ignored (trees, buildings, sculpture, fences, etc.). Full-sun-requiring species planted in the shade, even dappled shade, will lean toward the brightest light in an unattractive manner, or they will become overly “leggy,” and flop over or die.

Savanna or woodland species need to be planted on the north side of shade-producing objects (plants on the south side of objects get a lot more sun), or in areas of dappled shade. This is a good opportunity to increase species diversity, and use some of the many



In June, the bed is highlighted by the bright yellow flowers of black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), offset by the bright orange butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), and purple leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*). The long thin leaves of prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) blow in the wind. As planned, nothing in this bed will grow taller than thirty inches.

attractive native species that welcome a little shade.

#### **Management Problems and how to avoid them**

*Lack of monitoring and timely maintenance during establishment and beyond:*

There are many people, businesses and agencies that will assist in the design and installation of a native planting, but very few who offer to ensure that the site is managed properly both during establishment and later.

It only takes one round of weeds being allowed to set seed before a site becomes a real challenge to recover. Let it go for a couple of years, and it can be almost impossible to bring it back to an attractive and functional state. A new native planting needs to be checked routinely for at least two growing seasons, and management (usually weed-pulling, sometimes introduction of new species based on success/failure of initial selection) must be done in a timely fashion (i.e., before weeds drop any seed or invade bare ground). After the bed has been filled in by a selection of successful species that have re-seeded into the empty spots, occasional monitoring for weeds is still needed. Monitoring is also needed after extremes of weather that may stress or kill selected species, even after several years of growth.

Also, unexpected soil conditions (draining faster or slower than predicted, non-uniform clay layers, etc.) or changes in environmental conditions (shade trees installed nearby post-planting, water flow changes, etc.) may cause some species to establish poorly. These are reasons why an experienced ecologist should repeatedly evaluate plant establishment in the first years after planting, and recommend new species (based on those that are thriving) to be planted in a timely manner. This monitoring should begin within a month of initial planting. Allowing bare or sparsely covered ground to remain only provides opportunity for weeds to establish.

*Poor weed control:* Weed management needs to be understood and agreed upon before the site is established, long before weeds show significant growth. In an area with a heavy weed-seed bank (common on construction sites), a remarkable number of weeds usually develop the first year or two. This can also be true in fairly clean planting sites.



Once the native species are mature they provide enough competition for moisture, light, and nutrients that the weeds decline dramatically – at that point occasional spot weeding is sufficient for management.

In smaller beds the weeds need to be pulled or treated with herbicide until the native species self-seed and fill in all bare ground. This extremely important aspect of bed establishment is often delegated to grounds-maintenance staff, who don't know the native plants (especially immature ones), and don't want to pull weeds. Volunteers or others may be willing to weed, but usually don't know native species well enough to know what to leave and what to remove. The latter problem may be solved by spraying "sample" weeds with paint as a reference for weeder. Also, glyphosate treatment is especially effective in early spring and late fall when the native species are dormant. During the growing season a sponge on the end of a tank sprayer nozzle can be used to treat individual plants with herbicide.

In areas too large to weed by hand, routine mowing is needed until the prairie species establish. Native species are usually quite spindly the first year or two – mowing reduces weed competition for light and nutrients in addition to reducing weed vigor and seed set. Mowing high (six to eight inches left standing) when weeds become dominant during the first, and sometimes the second, growing seasons is essential. Also, if the site is in a high-visibility urban area, complaints about the weedy appearance can be reduced by mowing (*see note about signage below*).

*Including non-native plants:* Usually a mistake, because non-native species nearly always will require irrigation and fertilization. This short-circuits the low input benefit of using native species, and also has a negative impact on the native plants (*see next section*). Of course the natives too will require some watering during the early establishment phase, usually not more than four to six weeks (depending on rainfall).

*Fertilizers and irrigation are routinely applied:* Traditional landscape companies and gardeners sometimes assume that fertilizer and irrigation are required, or will make the planting "better" somehow. Routine watering and fertilizing will cause native species to grow inordinately large (sometimes double normal size), fall over, and/or die.

*Germination inhibitors are applied:* Use of seed germination inhibitors such as "Preen" to control weeds is not recommended. These products do not kill weed seeds, they merely prevent them from germinating for a short period after which the product must be re-applied or the weeds germinate. It is better to break the weed



A close-up taken in late July shows the bed in yet another seasonal transition. The nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*) is in serious nodding mode, just about to burst open, as is the common milkweed.

cycle by letting the weeds begin to grow, and then killing them in some manner (pulling, herbicide treatment, mowing). Furthermore, the long-term goal of the establishment phase is to get the native species to self-seed, and obviously seed germination inhibitors will interfere with that process.

*Unrealistic expectations of the landowner:* Often a landowner or group of people will become enthusiastic about the benefits of native landscaping without any knowledge of the challenges inherent in the establishment phase of these sites, and have additional fairly unrealistic expectations. Designers accustomed to establishing native species plantings may not realize the extent of this lack of understanding. When the realities of weed-pulling and mowing set in, along with a season or two of less-than-ideal landscape appearance, it can be uncomfortable for all involved. Extensive pre-planting emphasis on what to expect is very important, as is inclusion of a few species that can be counted on to germinate and bloom readily (e.g., partridge pea, black-eyed Susan, purple prairie clover).

*Lack of annual inspection:* A mature native planting will be quite stable and require little maintenance, but some desirable species may decline and be lost over time or after extreme weather events. It's good practice to monitor a site for the need to add/replace a few species. This is especially important if the site was compacted during construction, as the soils will loosen over time and drainage rate often increases, which in turn may affect plant growth.

*Weed "tolerance":* Land managers experienced in large-scale prairie establishment will sometimes adopt a nonchalant attitude toward mowing weeds. They allow a longer time period between mowings than is ideal because they know the native plants will eventually establish, and the weeds will decline

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



naturally. This leads to a protracted unattractive establishment phase. If the site is in a highly visible urban area it needs timely “cosmetic” mowing or spot string-trimming during establishment to help avoid negative reactions from the public.

### Public Education Issues

*Signage is essential:* Letting people know what’s going on is an important way to avoid complaints during vegetation establishment, and to educate at the same time. This is especially important if a site is challenging, and may take longer to establish – many urban native landscaping areas are old building sites, construction sites, parking lots, etc., with soils that are compacted and/or weedy, and consequently will have a protracted “ugly duckling” phase. In some cases, describing such a site in terms of a “traumatized landscape” may help convey the concept that it’s not just a native planting being established, it’s a natural landscape in the process of recovery.

*Borders:* A fence or a mowed area around the site conveys the message that a native planting is there on purpose, and being tended. This helps gain acceptance by the edgy public. Similarly, prairie plants hanging over a sidewalk, or blocking a line of vision for cars, don’t win many converts to native landscaping.

*Additional education through a range of media:* Articles in the local newspaper, tours of native plantings, local lectures and workshops, and hands-on days all help get the word out about the benefits and possibilities of native landscaping.

### Final Thoughts

There are many styles of flowerbed design, ranging from very formal and highly managed to a prairie/native plant “cottage garden” where the plants are allowed to re-seed with minimal human interference. To establish the latter style of landscaping I recommend putting in a selection of carefully chosen, attractive species, planted in drifts across a gradient (moisture or light) where they are expected to do well (additional species may be introduced using seed) – then allowing them to self-seed until the site is filled with native species. In this situation even a bed established with only already rooted plants (as opposed to seed) should be considered a seeding, since full establishment depends on self-seeding by the planted species. Once completely filled in, this style of native flower bed is very low maintenance – watering beyond the brief, early establishment phase, and fertilizing are not needed, and very few weeds can compete with established prairie species.

There are almost always surprises: The soil will hold more or less water than expected, has a different clay content than first thought – one species mysteriously does much better or worse than anticipated, and so on. The best way to counter this is to pay attention to what is happening: Monitor (and weed) the bed as the plants establish, and fill in with additional species based on observations of what did and didn’t do well. The more diversity you can introduce, the better. It will help ensure that something will do well even in years of extreme weather events – you will be lending sustainability to your site.

By the end of the second growing season, and certainly during the third season, the native species will begin self seeding (obviously, using seed germination inhibitors like “Preen” is not recom-



By mid-August the black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) flowers have faded and been replaced by orange coneflower (*Rudbeckia fulgida*), and joined by a canopy of blooming nodding onion.

mended). This is another indicator of what species are doing best, and is generally a good thing. Occasionally some species may reproduce more than desired, and need thinning (or transplanting) to allow other species room to establish. The vegetation should be mowed or burned annually in late winter, and spot-checked for weeds in early spring, and occasionally during the growing season.

I generally do not recommend trying to maintain bare/mulched ground in prairie-landscaped beds. Many of our prairie species are adapted to compete for bare ground, and will routinely self-seed. Maintaining open areas leads to the need to routinely deal with volunteer native seedlings along with actual weeds, circumventing the reduced maintenance benefit of native landscaping. If permanently unvegetated areas are desired, species that re-seed prolifically should be avoided, and routine weeding incorporated into long-term management plans.

In the end, native landscaping is “just” establishing a self-sustaining perennial flowerbed. Done correctly the resulting landscape cannot only be attractive and low input, but can offer something that non-native landscapes can’t: Habitat. This opens the doors to gaining a greater appreciation for our remarkable historic prairie landscape and native natural areas, and provides rewards beyond the mere enjoyment of a flowerbed. \*

[http://prcd.org/inl/recommended\\_plants.htm](http://prcd.org/inl/recommended_plants.htm): My lists of recommended native plants (including plants to avoid), compiled to help people have a successful start with native landscaping.

[www.pizzo.info/](http://www.pizzo.info/): Examples of successful urban, native-plant projects:

[www.for-wild.org/download/GrowItDontMowIt.pdf](http://www.for-wild.org/download/GrowItDontMowIt.pdf): Five steps toward minimizing potential conflicts with neighbors.





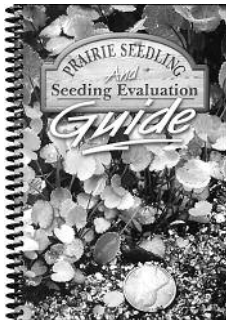
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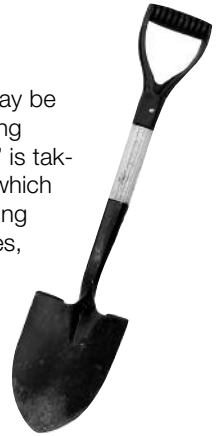
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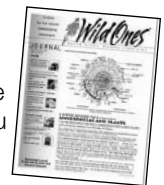
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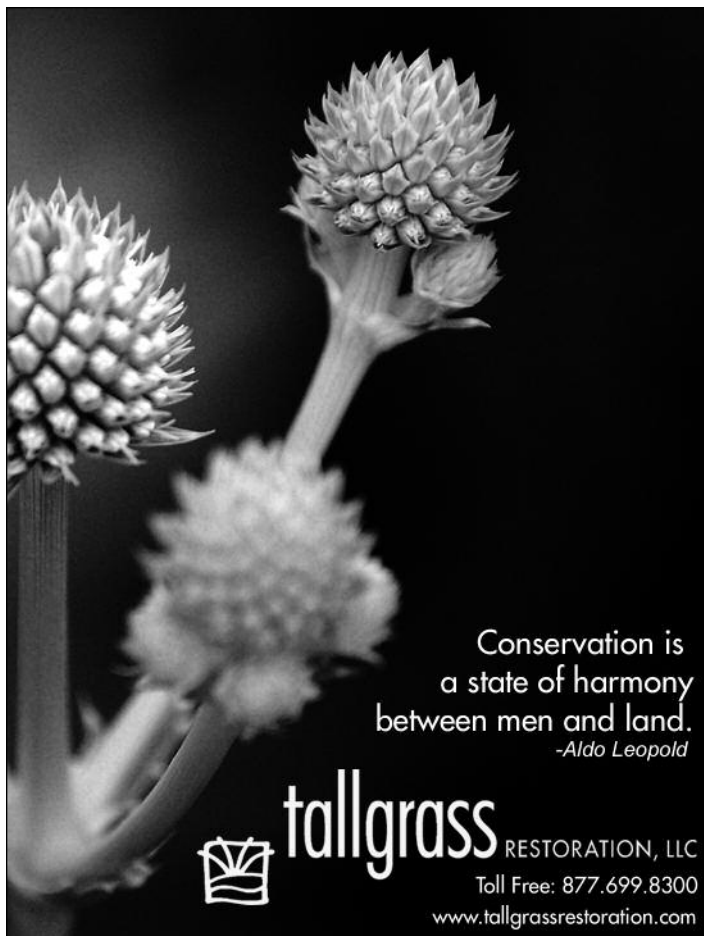
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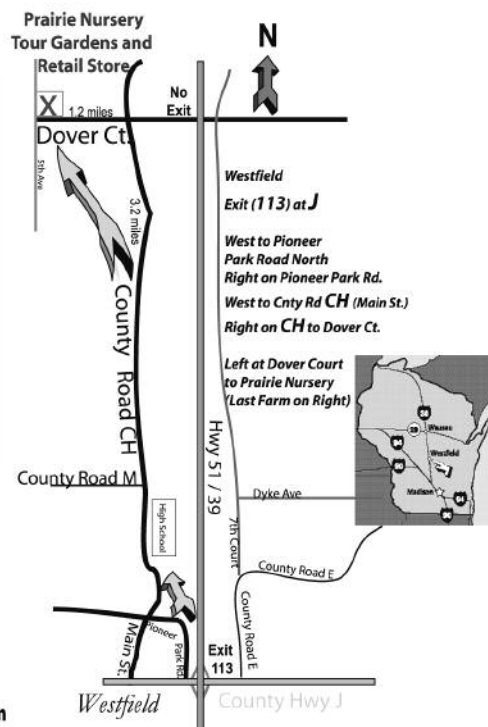
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**Milwaukee Southwest-Wehr Chapter #23**  
Message Center: 414-299-9888x2

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**Sheboygan Area Tension Zone Chapter #81**  
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**Wolf River Chapter #74**  
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For information about starting a chapter in  
your area, go to [www.for-wild.org/  
chapters.html](http://www.for-wild.org/chapters.html).

## Chapter Notes

Chairperson **Lanae Weichel** of **Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter** writes that Show Me/Help Me days are interesting for members who have established landscapes, as well as those looking for ideas or advice. These tours are a great learning opportunity and a chance to share knowledge and ideas. All members and their guests are welcome on the tours. This year they are including three locations.

President **Barb Holtz** of **Western Reserve (OH) Chapter** wrote that they held their annual plant survey for the Western Reserve Land Conservancy. Chapter members explored the Stracola property of mixed hardwood forest, swamp forest, button bush marshes, and several stages of succession. Possible wildlife on the property included otter, beaver, snowshoe hare, blue heron, and the occasional black bear. Also thirty acres of high-quality wetlands, with a variety of sedges so they made sure to bring their boots.

Program chairs **Laurie Stone Goldsmith** and **Carmen Simonet** have several tours planned this summer for the **Twin Cities (MN) Chapter**. In June they joined the **St. Croix Oak Savanna (MN) Chapter** to tour Prairie Restoration's native plant nursery in Scandia, "Two Oaks Prairie Restoration" – and during several evenings of July and August, they have tours of residential gardens all around the metro area. Members were invited to visit with the homeowners and learn about their experiences in gardening with native plants. Other tours included the prairie and woodland restoration of Lake Camelot Park in Plymouth, with Paul Buck, the City Forester, as guide. There was also a tour of a watershed-friendly garden designed with both native plants and cultivars – the landscape manager and site manager was on hand to lead the tour and answer questions about the design, installation, and maintenance of this large and beautiful rain garden in Minneapolis.

**Arrowhead (MN) Chapter** President **Carol Andrews** invited everyone to Habitat Here! Wild Ones and Hartley Nature Center hosted a day of fun and learning as they raised a trowel in honor of native plants. This new event, held at Hartley Nature Center in Duluth, educated participants in the importance of natural habitat, the need for more of it, and how they could help increase the quantity and quality of natural habitat in our neighborhoods. The day included presentations on butterflies and insects, tours of gardens, invasive species identification and control (that's where the trowel came in), kids activities, and the opportunity to purchase native plants.

Past-President **Rich Whitney** of the **Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter**, wrote that they had several tours lined up for the summer. In July they toured three member yards with each homeowner explaining how their yard got started (rescued plants, plugs, seedlings) and the type of habitat they are trying to establish/maintain. Also a Yard Tour/Picnic in August, with hot dogs, chips, and drinks. What no dessert?

**Rebecca Gale-Gonzalez**, newly elected President of the **Flint (MI) Chapter** wrote that they held their May meeting in Applewood, at the historic Mott estate. They wanted to be the first to see the spring flowers at Applewood. The meeting included a walking tour of Applewood's Gilkey Creek Restoration project, and the native wetland and upland landscape along its banks. Native woodland flowers, a diversity strip, rain garden, and native wildflower meadow bed also were included in the tour. Light refreshments were served.

## What's Wild on the Wild Ones Web Site

There are a couple of new things on our "Preservation and Restoration of Native Communities" page, ([www.for-wild.org/native.html](http://www.for-wild.org/native.html)). This is where we upload articles that have appeared in the *Wild Ones Journal*.

- All seven parts of **Richard Ehrenberg's (Madison (WI) Chapter)** Green Gables series: An American landscape designed with nature in mind.

- **Janet Allen's (Habitat Gardening of Central New York Chapter)** informative and readable Invasives on the Horizon series, related to invasive plants.

- **Maryann Whitman's (Oakland (MI) Chapter)** great series on "Mysteries Explored," a series of mysteries relating the importance of soil to natural landscaping, and the ways we are part of this delicate system of connections.

### Wild Ones Photo Contest

Voting for this year's **Photo Contest People's Choice** is on the members-only web pages at [www.for-wild.org/members/photo.cgi](http://www.for-wild.org/members/photo.cgi).

### Seeds For Education Guidelines

New guidelines for the **SFE Grant Program** for 2010, are at [www.for-wild.org/seedmony.html](http://www.for-wild.org/seedmony.html).

### Our "Bookstore" Is More Than Just Books

Don't forget the Wild Ones earns valuable commissions almost every time you buy something through our Amazon-Associate Bookstore – [www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore](http://www.for-wild.org/store/bookstore).



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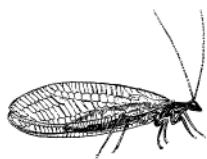
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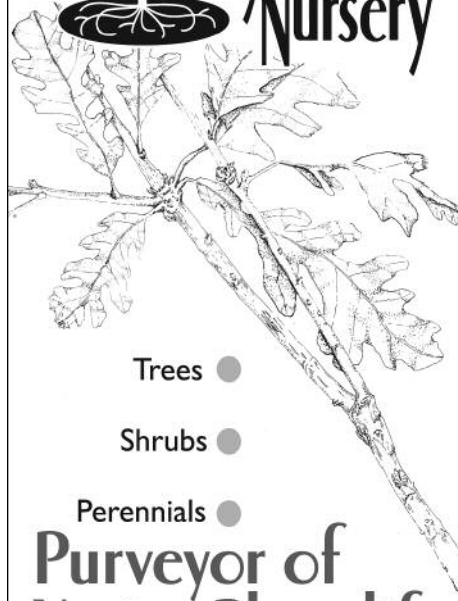
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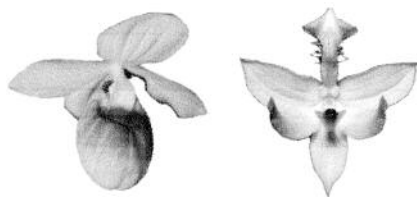
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#### Grant Program

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**Linda Gaylor and Barb Hunt** Columbus (Oh) Chapter  
**Barb Huss** Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter  
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**Vickie Hall** Sheboygan Area Tension Zone (WI) Chapter  
**Paul & Susan Damon and James Wellman** Twin Cities (MN) Chapter  
**Bob Kehres** Western Reserve (OH) Chapter

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**Barb Hunt** Columbus (OH) Chapter  
**Barbara Hayes** Detroit Metro (MI) Chapter  
**Beatrice Carrigg** Menomonee River Area (WI) Chapter  
**Joanne & Bob Wanasek** Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

### IN-KIND

**Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter** donated leftover plants from their annual Plant Sale and Plant Exchange.  
**Kathleen Comqxwsi**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated tree fencing.  
**Zaiga Freivalds**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated tree tubes.  
**Eileen & Don Herrling**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated several native and natural gardening books.

**Robert & Esther Mosher**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated various gardening hand tools and a garden hose.

**Dave & Sue Peck**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated shade plants.

**Rich Winter**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated labor and prairie plants.

**Dave Edwards**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, donated miscellaneous materials and labor.

### GENERAL OPERATING FUND

**Gretchen Neering** Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

**Will Wagner** Lake-To-Prairie (IL) Chapter

**Scott Meeker & Kathleen Ernst** and **Rose Meinholz** Madison (WI) Chapter

**Christopher & Martina Mann** Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

**Lois Robbins** Oakland (MI) Chapter

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