

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



JOURNAL

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER and
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2011
VOL. 24, NO. 5

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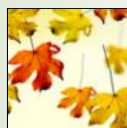
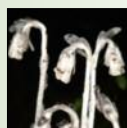
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Thank You. Back cover



This 20-foot wide side yard on a corner lot appears much more spacious than it is. Tall plants in the center of the street-side bed provide a privacy screen for the mowed sitting area. Photo by Pat Hill: naturalmidwestgarden.com.

Cues to Care

The language of neighborly landscaping

By Sally Elmiger

Yards of native landscapers generally look different. There isn't much lawn. The shrubs aren't trimmed into balls or cones. The perennials are all mixed up, and many get tall...very tall. So what's the problem? People who want their landscapes to benefit nature just have different ideas about how their yard should look, and function. Isn't that okay?

Of course it is. But in the travels of Wild Ones across the country, many of us have encountered folks who aren't knowledgeable about the ecological benefits of native-plant communities, and don't understand why anyone would want their yard to be anything but tidy, clipped, or manicured. Joan Iverson Nassauer, a professor of Landscape Architecture at the University of Michigan, looks at Americans' perceptions and misperceptions about nature and the human-built landscape. She interprets her study results in a manner that can guide native-plant enthusiasts to design yards that will be accepted more readily – and possibly appreciated if not actually emulated – by those who have traditional ideas about landscaping.

Perceptions and misperceptions of natural landscapes

Introducing her ideas on designing for ecologically sound/socially accepted landscapes, Nassauer explains some widely held American perceptions about natural landscapes (those that people have *not* manipulated):

- Areas of high ecological quality are often seen as messy. Messy is okay for uninhabited lands; it is considered a negative quality when applied to human-influenced landscapes, such as our yards or parks.
- The casual observer cannot look at a natural area and determine the ecological benefits it provides. "Scientific processes" are considered invisible. Consequently, the ecological benefits of a native planting in your yard are not obvious.

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

Growing leaders = growing Wild Ones



The whole time I was at the leadership conference and annual membership meeting in August, I was so pumped up. Even as I write this, I am still excited about what happened that weekend. Groups of people were talking – sharing experiences and ideas all the time we were there. Chapter leaders and members were connecting with each other, and learning ways to improve their chapters. Additionally, attendees developed a closer relationship with the national leaders and staff. The conference met its objective of growing individuals, chapters, and Wild Ones National Landscapers.

This conference was a first for us. In the past, we have had a few “leadership” workshops when they were held in conjunction with other conferences. But most lasted just two hours or less. Although there were good exchanges of information and ideas, I always felt like I needed more time to share with other chapter leaders. I suspect that others felt the same way. Because this conference was held over two days, it was exactly what we needed.

Just because the conference is over, it does not mean the sharing, encouragement, and support ends. I suspect that people will stay in touch and support each other. Someone asked if there was an online method for them to discuss things. For chapter leaders, they have their e-mail distribution lists. For example, chapter presidents can discuss things through their group e-mail address, and



membership chairs can in theirs. All they have to do is post to the e-mail address. For general members, we have the Yahoo discussion group, which has been in existence for years.

Not only do the leaders of the organization need support from each other, we need *your* encouragement and support. You may have already received our annual appeal letter. One way you can support your organization is financially. Of course, we will accept encouragement too. I'd like to ask you to read the letter while looking at your native garden. Then reflect on it and consider how you can support Wild Ones.

This year, we increased our membership past the 3,000 mark, despite the economy. I am very proud of this achievement. I am convinced that if the conference attendees apply just some of the ideas they heard, and we have the financial resources, we will grow even faster. When we work together, we can keep up the momentum and reach 5,000 members before we know it. Are you with me? ☺

Tim Lewis, Wild Ones National President (president@for-wild.org)

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

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Wild Ones Honorary Directors

Wild Ones is pleased to announce returning and newly appointed Honorary Directors.

Thomas Barnes, Professor and Wildlife Extension Specialist, Author and Photographer, Kentucky, 2013

Joyce Bender, Naturalist and Administrator, Kentucky, 2013

Neil Diboll, Naturalist & Nurseryman, Wisconsin, 2015

Marc Evans, Ecologist and Author, Kentucky, 2015

Bob Grese, Professor and Arboretum Director, Michigan, 2013

Janet Marinelli, Author and Editor, New York, 2015

Lynn Steiner, Editor, Author and Photographer, Minnesota, 2013

Doug Tallamy, Professor and Chair, Behavioral Ecologist and Author, Delaware, 2013

Jerry Wilhelm, Botanist, Illinois, 2015

Catherine Zimmerman, Author and Documentary Filmmaker, Maryland, 2015

As Honorary Directors, these well-known environmentalists will be tasked to help Wild Ones grow through their assisting us with projects and educational materials, their networking, and their speaking engagements. Please join us in thanking them for accepting this new role.

Chapter Notes

Illinois Prairie has generated enough interest that a local nursery (**Casey's**) has agreed to carry some natives, and the Wild Ones members will get a 20% discount. They also have forged a strong relationship with the headquarters for **State Farm Insurance**, and will be participating in their Employee Matching Gifts Program. They participated in the State Farm Earth Day Fair this summer.

Judy Packard has a locally developed DVD showing the **Kalamazoo Chapter's** activities and pictures of native plants. Their top-notch idea is to have this DVD running at their display during events. **Paul Olexia** has been collecting *Galerucella* (purple loose strife) beetles from a local marsh, and transferring them to plants in other areas.

Wild Ones chapter plant sales varied in size from 519 plants at **Wolf River** to 7,529 at **Rock River**. They all made money for Wild Ones with numerous plans to donate toward local environmental and natural landscaping projects. **Red Cedar** primed the pump for their sale by hosting a talk for Master Gardeners just prior to their sale. The **Greater DuPage** and **Northern Kane chapters** pooled resources, and made a joint purchase to good effect.

The **Red Cedar Chapter** is planning to work with the **American Chestnut Project** to try to preserve genotype. They hope to be working with Chris Hull, who manages Fenner Chestnut Trees Nursery (as part of the American Chestnut Project). Fenner collects seeds for potting and germinating so the seedlings can be given to landowners who have proper growing conditions. 🌱

Wild Ones Gets Awards

Chapter president **Amy Heilman** announced recently that **River City (MI) chapter's** new display won two blue ribbons in the annual **Kent Garden Club Flower Show**.

Outreach Coordinator and Historian **Carol Phelps** did the research into the layout, using ideas from the **Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter's** display, and **Ruth Oldenburg**, a graphic designer and also chapter Membership Chair, created the collage of text and images. It won both ribbons in the category of "Educational, Informative Display." "We were honored to be asked to present at this show, which in the past has focused on traditional landscape plantings. It seems the awareness of the benefits of native plants is on the increase." Congratulations, on a job well done. 🌱



Do you think we are being too hard on invasives? Stop worrying, and just “embrace the change”? Neil Diboll says, “Not on my watch.”

This is a continuation of the series that began in the May/June issue of the *Journal*, in response to a call from some biologists that we “embrace the change” that invasive, non-native plants represent. Long-time Wild Ones member, Wild Ones honorary director, and owner of Prairie Nursery doesn't like the idea, and (in no uncertain terms) tells us why.

By Neil Diboll

In his article, “A Friend to Aliens,” Mark Davis posits that we should embrace non-native invasive plants because they represent the future of ecology, and we had better get used to them. By introducing these plants into our ecosystems, we have created a new set of conditions that has forever altered the ecology of our forests, prairies, and wetlands. There is no going back.

Dr. Davis is correct – sort of

There is no question that the balance of our once-native ecosystems has been radically altered with the introduction of buckthorn, garlic mustard, honeysuckles, kudzu, spotted knapweed, quackgrass, Canada thistle, and a host of other aggressive plants. It is challenging, if not impossible, to restore one's land to strictly pre-European settlement vegetation. There will always be a few invasive weeds here and there, unless you employ an army of vigilant gardeners to patrol and control them.

Even once-pristine plant communities that are not actively managed are subject to invasion by non-natives, usually resulting in a plunge in populations of native plants and the overall biodiversity of these newly altered ecosystems.

Dr. Davis is under the impression that we should welcome these changes, as they are inevitable. Resistance is futile. Surrender now. Learn to love the conquering hordes, for they are here to stay. Do not worry as they consume your prairies and woodlands, snuffing out wildflowers, constricting food webs, and turning once beautiful places into unattractive and sometimes nearly mono-dimensional wastelands.

As long as plants are green, should we care?

Dr. Davis also appears to believe that all plants are simply interchangeable green things that serve relatively equal functions in a given ecosystem. As long as they're green, who cares?

As an ecologist, I recognize that the genie is out of the bottle and cannot be stuffed back in, no matter how much garlic mustard I pull or buckthorn I kill. We have to learn to live with these plants. There is no way we can “turn back the clock” and restore pristine pre-settlement vegetation. Nature simply doesn't work that way.

Yet I persist in my efforts to create beautiful, diverse, native-plant communities. I know they will not be completely devoid of exotics, and I will constantly have to control aggressive plants, be they non-native or native (such as box elder, wild grape, prickly ash, blackberries, and poison ivy, to name a few aggressive natives). But is it really any more work than slavishly mowing the lawn? My 1-acre prairie requires two or three hours to burn every other year, and four to eight hours to pull and dig weeds annually. I cannot possibly imagine mowing an acre of lawn every weekend.

My prairie may not be perfect

I am under no illusions that my prairie will be perfect. It's got quackgrass and brome grass, and even an occasional buckthorn

creeps in. But it is a thing of beauty, and has replaced a tangle of box elder, buckthorn, and Tartarian honeysuckle. I now have dozens of flowers and grasses where I once had none, along with myriad butterflies, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and a host of other wildlife.

I have no interest in living in a world dominated by buckthorn, honeysuckle, garlic mustard, kudzu, multiflora rose, Norway maple, tree of heaven, and other hegemonic plants.

My efforts have provided beauty to my living environment, and a home for an untold variety of plants and animals, all in a low-maintenance landscape that requires practically no pesticides, and consumes no energy except my own.

The bottom line for me is simple: Quality of life

Sure, we could just give up and let invasive plants overrun our beautiful native ecosystems. Why bother? It's all so inevitable. It's our punishment for bringing these hyper-aggressive plants here in the first place. Now we must pay the piper for our foolhardiness.

Instead of living in a comfortable old farmhouse, I could just as well live in a cardboard box. It provides shelter, so what's the big deal? Too bad there's no kitchen, but at least you're out of the weather. As Doug Tallamy pointed out in his article in the May/June *Wild One's Journal*, native plants support far more insects than non-natives. Since insects form the foundation of the faunal food chain, complex food webs are often shredded when non-natives replace natives in our ecosystems. Sort of like a cardboard box ecosystem.

I have no interest in living in a world dominated by buckthorn, honeysuckle, garlic mustard, kudzu, multiflora rose, Norway maple, tree of heaven, and other hegemonic plants. I will not learn to love them, nor will I accept them as part of some weird “new family.” These are destructive plants that threaten the aesthetic value and biodiversity of my corner of the world. I will not go quietly into the night. I will fight for my quality of life, for the stunning beauty of our native plant communities, and for the wildlife they support.

Don't expect me to ever give up

You will have to pry my cold, dead fingers off my chain saw before I will relent in my efforts to eliminate buckthorn from my property and replace it with gorgeous native ecosystems that sing with life. Call me crazy, but I'll expend the energy required to create beauty and vibrancy on my property. I will not meekly accept the inevitability of despair and diminished expectations for my home and the creatures with whom I share it.

Fight On! 🍀

Eurasian honeysuckle: Bad for birds, bad for trees, and bad for you

By Mariette Nowak

Researchers have documented, in many recent studies, that the Eurasian honeysuckle (*Lonicera sp.*) hereafter referred to as "honeysuckle" shrubs are much more harmful than previously believed. While it has long been known that these shrubs are invasive, and obliterate native understory vegetation, including native shrubs and herbaceous plants, it has now been shown that honeysuckles are also very detrimental to birds, trees, and yes, even humans.

Bad for birds

Let's take a look at birds, first. Birds love the berries so you might think, as even some "experts" have contended, that Eurasian honeysuckles have at least one important redeeming quality, and perhaps we should not be removing them. But Dr. Amanda Rodewald at the School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Ohio has a decade of research to show otherwise. She has demonstrated that honeysuckle disproportionately affects rare birds, while also being detrimental to common species.

How does this happen? She has summarized her findings in five main points:

- The presence of honeysuckle reduces both the numbers and nesting success of rare birds such as the Acadian flycatcher, which avoids dense honeysuckle thickets.
- Birds that purportedly benefit from honeysuckle are generally the more common birds that do well in a variety of developed areas. These birds have a lower conservation priority than the rare birds that may be harmed by honeysuckle.
- Rodewald, as well as researchers at the Morton Arboretum in Illinois, have found that there is more predation of the nests of cardinals and other songbirds in honeysuckle (and buckthorn) than in native shrubs.
- Honeysuckle increases the risk of cowbird parasitism, and thus reduces the nesting success of Acadian flycatchers.
- Honeysuckle reduces the success of the brightest and healthiest cardinals because they are best able to secure habitat in honeysuckles, but ultimately produce fewer offspring because of the higher predation rate.

Stunts the growth of trees

The harmful effects of honeysuckle on trees was documented by Dr. Brian C. McCarty at

the Department of Environmental and Plant Biology at Ohio University and his doctoral student, Kurt M. Hartman. By taking tree cores in Ohio forests invaded by honeysuckle, they found a significant reduction in overall tree growth. Twelve invaded forest stands were compared to four uninvaded stands. Overall tree growth was reduced by 53.1 percent in the invaded sites.

Not surprisingly, the density and diversity of herbaceous plants, tree seedlings, and saplings were also significantly lower. Sadly, Hartman states, "Throughout the landscape where we conducted our study, native shrubs are a rarely encountered life form."

Not good for you either

Honeysuckle has an adverse affect on humans, as well. Back in 2004, researchers at the Lyme Disease Research Laboratory at Maine Medical Center Research Institute found that the number of blacklegged ticks were doubled on sites with invasive shrubs like honeysuckle and Japanese barberry, (*Berberis thunbergii*). There were twice as many adults and nearly twice as many nymphs in plots dominated by these exotic invasives than in plots dominated by native shrubs. It is well known that Lyme disease is spread through tick bites. Because of this association, the researchers concluded that "exotic-invasive understory vegetation presented an elevated risk of human exposure to the vector tick of Lyme disease."

Similar results were documented in 2010 by researchers in Missouri. In this case, they found that yet another tick-spread disease, ehrlichiosis, is promoted by honeysuckle. White-tailed deer, (*Odocoileus virginianus*), primary hosts for ticks, preferred invaded honeysuckle sites in this study. In turn, this resulted in significantly higher numbers of ticks in the honeysuckle thickets, compared to sites without honeysuckle.

Even worse, there were 10 times the number of nymphs infected with the disease bacterium, the ultimate cause of ehrlichiosis. The researchers concluded: "Overall, these experimental results confirm the hypothesis that deer preferentially



Lonicera tortorica has opposite leaves, and is a prodigious producer of berries bearing seeds.

use areas invaded by honeysuckle, increasing the abundance of ticks in those areas and increasing the resulting disease risk." ❧

ATTACKING HONEYSUCKLE

Author's Note: Autumn is an excellent time to attack honeysuckle and apply herbicide either through injection or stump painting. I've never tried the former, but purportedly it is easier. In either case, sap travels down to the roots in fall and carries the herbicide with it, making autumn the perfect time for application.



The Inside Story

By Janice Stiefel



The Inside Story, by Janice Stiefel

Originally all 66 of Janice's articles appeared in our *The Outside Story* and the *Wild Ones Journal* in black and white and without photos. But this 80-page book is printed in total color, and includes photos of the plants and related insects. Janice was an important part of Wild Ones' early history. A wealth of information for anyone who appreciates native plants.

\$25 at the Wild Ones Store.

www.for-wild-ones.org/store

Autumn's Natural Skeletons and Witches

By Barb Bray

Is there a skeleton in your garden? If your garden is a rain garden, two plants will make you think “skeletons” – mad dog skullcap and boneset. A member of the mint family, mad dog skull cap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*) blooms in mid to late summer. Early settlers believed that this plant cured rabies, hence the “mad dog” designation, while the flower’s helmet-like shape is reflected in the rest of the name – skull cap. Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) also blooms around the same time as the skull cap, but its claim to fame is an old belief that this plant could mend broken bones.

If you don’t have either of these plants, then maybe you have dead man’s fingers in your yard. There are two types, both caused by fungus. The first type can grow near the base of a dead tree or even from a compost pile. They are black mushroom-like fungal growths appearing as if they are reaching out of the ground. How’s that for creepy?

The second type of dead man’s fingers deforms the branches of cherry and plum trees. The branches develop hard, crusty black knots, which give it another name: Black knot galls. If that’s not enough, maybe caterpillars or beetles are “skeletonizing” tree leaves in your yard. A skeletonized leaf is completely devoured except for the veins and leaf edges.

Of course, skeletons need company. Ghosts and Jack-o’-lanterns fit the bill. In the deep, dark woods a tiny ghost roams the forest floor sucking life from below. If you pick up this “ghost,” it will turn into a black “corpse.” It has several other-worldly names – death plant, ice plant, and ghost plant.

Perhaps you know this “ghost”? Biologists know it as *Monotropa uniflora*, or Indian pipe. This unusual plant has no chlorophyll, so it depends upon soil fungus to help it acquire nutrients from nearby plants. The plant’s white waxy flower and stem resemble an upside-down clay pipe. It is said to be difficult to grow in gardens, so look for this flower in rich, shady woods in the summer.

What is orange, a common sight in October, smells good, and glows in the dark? Did you guess

Omphalotus olearius – a mushroom? This mushroom is bright orange, just like a pumpkin, and can be found in October on rotting stumps of hardwood trees. If you are lucky enough to find one of these “Jack-o’-lantern” mushrooms in your yard, you can take it into a dark room in your house to see it glow. Your eyes must adjust to the darkness to see the eerie greenish glow of the gills on this mushroom. The glow is caused by the presence of luciferases, or waste products from metabolic processes in the mycelium.

Peonies can be ghoulish too. They are native to Asia, southern Europe, and western North America. Long ago, Greeks believed that peonies were magical plants that could shine during a full moon, and were powerful enough to drive away demons. Because the gods wanted the peonies for themselves, they sent giant woodpeckers to guard these sacred flowers. If people tried to dig up the peonies, the woodpeckers would attack and gouge their eyes out. Although nighttime was a safer time to dig peonies, it still had its risks. When the plants were dug up, they groaned in a supernatural way that could kill a person.

To protect themselves, people would tie a dog to the plant, stuff its ears, and then move far away. They coaxed the animal toward them with a piece of meat, and when it lunged, it pulled the plant out of the ground.

Greeks and Romans used the peony to treat epilepsy and nightmares. In the past,

people believed that illnesses, accidents, nightmares, and other bad events were caused by magical forces. Magical forces might be demons or even witches. Certain

People long ago believed that some plants provided signs that a witch was nearby.

plants, often poisonous, were valued because it was believed that they could drive away evil or at least, alert you to it.

If witches were everywhere, what was a person to do? People long ago believed that some plants provided signs that a witch was nearby. If your hackberry tree (*Celtis occidentalis*) developed a bunch of sprouts growing out in one direction creating a shape oddly resembling a “witch’s broom,” that was a sure sign that a witch had flown over your tree. Maybe near your doorway, a strange mushroom started growing. The mushroom resembled a spoonful of orange marmalade smeared on wood. This mushroom is called “witch’s butter” (*Tremella mesenterica*), and would mean that a witch had cast a spell on you. The only way to save yourself was to prick the witch’s butter with straight pins to kill the fungus.

A nice fall walk in the woods could turn scary when a nearby tree suddenly started ejecting seeds with a loud pop. A witch, of course, was the culprit in the case of the mysterious witch hazel tree (*Hamamelis virginiana*).

A number of other plants are also associated with witches. Look closely at the leaves of a witch hazel tree and you might see small conical-shaped galls made by aphids. These small red protrusions are known as “witch’s hat galls.” In the fall, bright orange “witch’s hat mushrooms” appear in mixed conifer/hardwood forests.

Honeysuckle has a connection with witches too. It is said that Scottish witches once used wreaths of honeysuckle vines to “cure” patients. A sickly patient would be passed nine times through the wreath, nine being a magical number. CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



Magnolia leaves, like this one, seem to have a vein structure that can withstand skeletonization.

BOOK REVIEW

Airplanes in the Garden: Monarch Butterflies Take Flight

A book by Joan Z. Calder

Review by Barb Bray

If you are looking for a good book about monarch butterflies geared toward young children, this is the perfect choice. From the inviting title to the cute story, Joan Calder draws the reader (and listeners) into the relationship between a young girl and two monarch caterpillars on a milkweed plant.

The story begins in the family garden. Bonnie, the young girl in the story, loves monarch butterflies, and imagines they are airplanes. When her mom points out the eggs on the milkweed, Bonnie returns every day to watch the eggs until caterpillars emerge. Then she “adopts” two of them, and lovingly bestows the names Sergio and Stanley on them. Excitement builds as the caterpillars grow larger. Then one day they disappear. Bonnie, upset at first, soon discovers Sergio and Stanley on the verge of changing into butterflies. She watches each of them

form a chrysalis, develop inside, and eventually emerge as adults.

Airplanes in the Garden is more than just a good story – it is a work of art and a wonderful source of information that grows with your child. The illustrations, by watercolor artist Cathy Quiel, help the reader see what young Bonnie sees: Monarch butterflies as airplanes, and flowers as airports. Children will love the image of a monarch “airplane” filled with bug passengers.

They will also fall in love with Sergio and Stanley, who look so cute munching on their milkweed leaves. The combination of a great story and beautiful pictures is what will keep the interest of preschool-aged children. As children get older and ask more questions, the book presents information about the life cycle of the monarch butterfly, migration routes, and butterfly gardens.

I recently read this book to a small group of children, ages 4 through 6. After the story, I asked the kids if they liked it, and it was unanimous. All eight children said that they liked the story a lot. One little girl said that she especially enjoyed it because it was about a butterfly. The story and pictures helped keep the youngest ones engaged, while the older kids enjoyed the details.

A favorite part of the story occurred when the mom was telling Bonnie about the life cycle of a monarch. After listening to her mom, Bonnie finally says, “I’m going to call this ‘the-plant-that-grows-butterflies.’” All the kids thought that was pretty funny.

All in all, *Airplanes in the Garden* is a fun and informative book that will entertain as well as educate children from preschool age to early elementary school age. I highly recommend this book. ■

AUTUMN'S NATURAL SKELETONS AND WITCHES CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Have you ever heard of “witch’s thimbles”? You might have it growing in your garden, but you probably know it as “foxgloves” (*Digitalis spp.*). Both names refer to the flower shape, similar to thimbles or small gloves. One legend says that fairies gave these flowers to foxes so they could raid chicken coops.

Finally, witches brewed up concoctions for various reasons using some very poisonous plants – henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), belladonna (*Atropa belladonna*), and mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*). You probably don’t have these members of the nightshade family (*Solanaceae*) growing in your garden, but you might have one called “moon flower.” Moon flowers (*Datura innoxia*) are native to Central and South America. The plant produces beautiful white flowers, up to 8 inches long, for several weeks during the summer. The flowers open in the evening to be pollinated by moths at night. By the next morning they are wilting. The plant produces very prickly seed pods. This plant was also used in witch’s “brews.” It’s an interesting annual to grow, but because of its toxicity, it’s not a good choice with young children around.

The Salem witchcraft trials in the late 1600s may have a link to fungus. Researchers now believe that the fungus known as *Claviceps purpurea* was responsible for the hysteria and witchcraft accusations. This fungus can infect grain crops, such as rye and wheat, during damp weather. If the grain is harvested and then baked into a loaf of bread, the fungus can cause an illness known as “ergotism.” Symptoms associated with ergotism include hallucinations, vomiting, diarrhea, and a feeling like something is crawling on your skin.

Freaky flowers and creepy fungi are just the sort of plants that can help you get in the mood for a fun fall. If you like the idea of a garden full of “skeletons,” “ghosts,” “witches,” and other characters, there are even more ideas available. Check out some web sites for ideas on spooky gardens.

I just purchased a weird plant called “peek a boo plant” (*Spilanthes oleracea*), also known as “eyeball plant.” It’s not native, but it looks like a bunch of little yellow eyeballs looking up at me from the ground. It’s kind of creepy, but in a cool halloween kind of way. Happy halloween. ■



Ghost plant or corpse plant (or plain old Indian pipe) may rarely have touches of pink and purple.

Virgin's Bower

a showy native vine
with an overpowering
presence

Article by Rick Meader



This delicate white clematis can make a breathtaking, cascading bouquet for a bride who happens to marry in early August. Photo by Rick Meader.



Many people (including me) have non-native clematis in their yard as a showy, colorful member of their garden family. The color they provide is outstanding, and their vines can cover a decorative piece of metal sculpture or an ugly mailbox pole like nobody's business. Virgin's bower (*Clematis virginiana*) is a native member of that family whose flowers may not be as large, but whose overpowering presence can dress up your yard, too.

First, the facts. Virgin's bower (aka devil's darning needles or old man's beard according to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center web site) is a native vine most often found in damp settings, such as along stream banks or in floodplains. It does well in a range of soil and light conditions, but it doesn't do well in coarse soils such as sand and gravel. It is a member of the buttercup family (*Ranunculaceae*), and is therefore kin to buttercups, columbine anemones, delphiniums, and meadow rues.

It has toothed leaves in sets of three along the vine, which twists itself around other plants to support itself. Quite an aggressive grower, it has successfully reached every nook and cranny of my tomato garden, and covered my non-native clematis to such an extent that it may not survive.

On the positive side, in late summer, it forms a beautiful cascade of small white flowers with five sepals, which change into showy, feathery seed heads late into the fall. You can even find them in winter. It is native to the eastern half of North America, from the Dakotas to Texas and eastward, and is found throughout most of the counties in Michigan, according to the USDA Plants database.

It's a beautiful flower, and I'm happy to have it in my garden, but if you add it to yours, expect to wield the shears, and pull it frequently, because it is a spreader. Another positive is that it attracts butterflies and hummingbirds.

On the downside, it's toxic, so don't eat it. This toxicity led to its use by the Iroquois to induce strange dreams. Uses by the Cherokee included an infusion (with milkweed) for treating backache and an infusion from the roots for kidney ailments.

The University of Michigan-Dearborn website lists a total of 10 uses, although I am sure there are many more by tribes other than the Cherokee and Iroquois, since it is so widespread and showy. If you have room for it to grow, and would like to enjoy its showy, cascading carpet of white flowers in your yard, go out and buy some for yourself. It is available from most native plant growers.

In my own yard, this August, blooming in my yard were virgin's bower, brown-eyed Susan, green-headed coneflower, grey-headed coneflower, white snakeroot, and nodding wild onion. It's the calm before the aster and goldenrod storm. ☘

Grapevine

The Annual Meeting/Conference, don't blame the bats, and spreading invaders.

By Maryann Whitman

The Wild Ones Annual Meeting/Conference

While looking at the pictures from the Annual Meeting/Conference I couldn't help thinking "this looks like a family reunion." There were people meeting inside, people meeting outside, some were hanging out in the kitchen, and others were strolling around the grounds. It was all informal and comfortable, with a barbecue and picnic tables. Someone was over-nighting in a tent on the north lawn. All were familiar faces – or if not, you could walk up to a stranger, introduce yourself, and ask, "So what chapter are you from?" Everyone belonged there.

I sincerely regret not being able to attend this get-together. Mostly because it was held at our Wild Ones home base – and that's what the WILD Center is for all of us. It's not in a steel high-rise in Washington, D.C., but in Wisconsin, where the idea of Wild Ones was first created, and where our "grass roots" first began to grow. We are scattered all around the country, but we always have a place where we belong.

The WILD Center not only houses the National offices, it is the hub around which the organization circulates. No Wild Ones chapter, no matter how well established, can be a self-sustaining entity on its own. It exists through National. For a chapter to exist successfully, National must exist successfully. We are all parts of a symbiotic relationship, supportive of each other, knowing that we can't afford to lose any part of "us." Our strength locally is because we are part of a larger, national organization. We are strong as a national organization because we have all these parts – chapters and their members and partners-at-large – to sustain us.

Wild Ones National presents and represents our face to the world. We are making great strides at creating a home base for ourselves at the WILD Center. The front walk and rain garden could easily make the front page of a magazine. Next year the home base and the reunion will be even better. I am looking forward to meeting you at next year's reunion.



Is this a meeting or a family reunion? When Wild Ones members come together you can be sure no one is a stranger.

The WILD Center not only houses the National offices, it is the hub around which the organization circulates. No Wild Ones chapter, no matter how well established, can be a self-sustaining entity on its own. It exists through National. For a chapter to exist successfully, National must exist successfully. We are all parts of a symbiotic relationship, supportive of each other, knowing that we can't afford to lose any part of "us." Our strength locally is because we are part of a larger, national organization. We are strong as a national organization because we have all these parts – chapters and their members and partners-at-large – to sustain us.

risk pales in contrast to the benefits bats provide. In fact, bats hunt and reduce the number of insects carrying diseases such as West Nile virus. And scientists recently concluded that bats save American farmers billions of dollars a year by consuming crop-destroying pests. Bats also pollinate many valuable plants, and disperse seeds that help restore damaged rainforests. In North America, right now, their own disease, white-nose syndrome, which

Back to business

Bats, the little creatures of the night, prolific bug-eaters, and pollinators, have an undeservedly spooky reputation. Some movie makers take advantage of this reputation to add a bit of "horror" to their stories. The recently released movie, "Contagion," is one of these. A mysterious, fast-spreading virus kills countless humans around the world. In the end, it is concluded that the virus was linked to bats. Bat Conservation International has released this official statement about "Contagion": "Although bats sometimes harbor pathogens, any

does not affect humans, is decimating bat populations. For centuries, bats have been threatened because of misinformation and myths. We hope this movie does not encourage such needless fears."

Take heed

Clematis virginiana (on the left-hand page), and *Clematis vitalba*, also called "old man's beard," and sometimes unwittingly sold as our native, resemble each other remarkably well. *C. vitalba* is the UK's only native clematis.

Like *C. virginiana* it has small,

white sepals (that can be mistaken for petals), stamens, and stigmas. **The one readily perceptible difference is that its leaflets typically grow in fives, as opposed to *C. virginiana*'s which grow in threes.** If you have doubt, check it out carefully. My experience with this plant strongly suggests that it may quickly become a serious invasive in my southeast Michigan woods. While *C. virginiana* is a spreader, it is nowhere nearly as rampant as *C. vitalba*. Natural area stewards are mounting an all-out war on *C. vitalba* in New Zealand, where it behaves like our kudzu. ■

My Ten Suggestions for Home Landscaping With Native Plants

By Jeremy Berger

Now that summer is officially over, it's a good time to start planning for next year's growing season. I have created a list of "Ten Suggestions" for home landscaping. The list focuses on things we should think about when adding plants to our landscapes.

1 Never plant known invasive species This should be a no-brainer, but you would be surprised at how many plants with varying degrees of invasiveness are still being sold. Japanese barberry, winged burning bush, and even dame's rocket are still readily available. Do some research before you purchase your plants. Key-word searches from your smartphone, with the scientific name and "invasive" after, will quickly let you know if you are considering something invasive. This will also reduce plants that escape cultivation and wreak havoc on surrounding habitats and communities.

2 Plant good native alternatives before non-natives There are books and web sites devoted solely to native alternatives for common non-native or even invasive plants. Again, being armed with information prior to shopping will help you make wise choices when buying plants. I recommend the guide by the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens as a great starting place. (Editor's note: *The Midwestern Native Garden*, by Wild Ones member Charlotte Adelman, will have a large section on such alternative plants. It is currently in press and will soon be available in the Wild Ones Store.)

3 Work smarter, not harder This is really where planting natives comes into play. Lower maintenance, reduced water use, less lawn space to tend, and, a reduction in home chemical use are all benefits of native plantings.

4 Incorporate natural heritage Plants found in your area have evolved over thousands of years to live in those conditions, and will be easier to grow than plants from somewhere else. In fact, they deserve a place in your yard. They have functional roles to play in addition to their aesthetic ones.

5 Consider wildlife Like it or not, you share the world with other creatures. Native plants are the foundation for all levels of life. Not only are they a food source, but they also provide important habitat for insects, birds, mammals, and other life forms that are often displaced by development. Considering these other forms of life in your landscaping is a moral obligation, not a choice. The greater the amount of native plant diversity you have, the more animal life you can support.

6 Never steal native plants from the wild or from naturalized areas Now that you have a desire and a rationale for using native plants, you might get frustrated trying to find a plant source. Taking plants from the wild or from naturalized areas, such as those around detention basins used for erosion control, is illegal, unethical, and takes away from other people's enjoyment of the area. Check online for native seed and plant sources, go to smaller garden centers as ask about natives, or even get permission to collect seeds from areas that have native vegetation. Native-plant organizations such as Wild Ones chapters, or state native plant societies often have plant exchanges or sales. Contact one of these organizations or county extension offices for help finding native plants. (And watch for construction salvage opportunities.)

7 Talk to your neighbors It can be easy to "go wild" once you have been bitten by the native plant bug. But before you turn your yard into a natural area, don't forget to keep neighbors informed of what you are doing. Perhaps start small to allow the idea to grow. Constant disagreements with people in your community about your plantings are sure to detract from everyone's enjoyment. Educate those who are not aware of the benefits of native plantings. Compromise when you can, to keep the peace. This might take as little as keeping a small lawn buffer zone between properties. Having community support is something that should not be overlooked or taken for granted.

8 Share your native plants Sharing extra plants, seeds, bulbs, or cuttings with others is a great way to educate, promote, and introduce native plants to others, who, for whatever reason, don't have any. It is also a good way to network with others who share your interest.

9 Enjoy nature with children Observing wildlife, having nature-based tactile experiences, and getting to know natural history are all beneficial, helping people to experience the bigger ecological picture. Not to mention, it is just plain fun.

10 Use chemicals sparingly It is much easier to embrace the insects, animals, and volunteer plants than it is to fight them. You and your yard will be healthier for it as well. ■



NOTE FROM JEREMY BERGER
I started the blog GNOME (Great Natives of Midwestern Ecotype) in the fall of 2008. My goal was to share my experiences with native plants and animals with others. I was beginning my journey in native landscaping, and was really surprised at how quickly the fauna in my area was drawn to it. It wasn't long before my neighbors, who really had no interest in native plants, began asking about this or that in my yard. I began sharing plants, knowledge, and techniques with them. The response from people was positive, so I decided to expand and share my experiences with others via the Internet. Both the web site (gnomenative.webs.com) and the Facebook group provide a great venue to gain and to share information with the wider global community.

I don't get paid to create my newsletters. It's just my way to both keep on top of what is going on related to my interest, and to help others in their journey as well. At this point, my online journals have had over 16,000 individual page views and almost 1,500 unique readers. I average between 50 and 150 consistent readers per issue. I have also had numerous people let me know that they have tried various suggestions or methods from my journal. I get a lot of satisfaction from the fact that I am helping others enjoy the benefits of native landscaping. That is what keeps me going.

Redefining Beauty

By Mollie Babize

Burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) was one of my Dad's favorite plants, when we were living just outside Chicago. The brilliant fall color gives it its common name. Its flanged branches provide a year-round structure that is handsome in winter. The red berries provide food for birds when other sources run out. And, most importantly, the association with my father remains deeply rooted in my heart.

My own first home had a gorgeous mature burning bush at the edge of the driveway. It protected the well head from plows in winter, and provided privacy for the side yard in the summer. It screened the cars from view. It was a beautiful plant in exactly the right place.

Right place – wrong plant

Reluctantly, I began to see small volunteers coming up in the adjacent woodlands, planted by the birds. On hikes through the region's woodlands, I began to recognize burning bush as one of the first understory plants to leaf out, along with Japanese honeysuckle and glossy buckthorn. That's one of the tricks of invasive plants I learned – they leaf out early, shading others that might have come up. Eventually, I tore out the burning bush at my home, but only after living with it for several years while I let go of the emotional ties.

When I was a student at the Conway School of Landscape Design, in western Massachusetts, teacher extraordinaire Don Walker shared a quote by conservation ecologist Aldo Leopold: "One of the penalties of an ecological education is living alone in a world of wounds." It is true: The more we learn, the more we see the damage in our environment. Perhaps we are less alone than Leopold was in his time, but it is still a tough lesson to live with.

It has been 26 years since I graduated from the Conway School, and still I struggle with what to include in my gardens. For many years, I concentrated on vegetables, believing this to be a more productive use of my time and space. It was also less prob-

When I am working on a problem I never think about beauty. I only think about how to solve the problem. But when I have finished, if the solution is not beautiful, I know it is wrong. – Buckminster Fuller



lematic, since few vegetables can survive winter in this region (western Massachusetts). No danger of invasives there (except perhaps the strawberries if I don't keep up with them).

But I've had to admit a love for perennials, and not just natives. I justify this by selecting those that are less aggressive, and ripping out the bullies. In looking for ornamental trees or shrubs, I've chosen ones that are native, or at least cultivars of natives. Three new serviceberry trees (*Amelanchier* sp.) line the road. I've rescued and transplanted pagoda dogwoods (*Cornus alternifolia*) and sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*). And a fabulous multi-stem redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) anchors my newest bed.

There is another dimension to beauty in the garden, that challenges how we see things. Douglas Tallamy explores this in his book, *Bringing Nature Home*. Noting that exotic species are often less prone to insect damage (and in fact that is one trait that

nurseries often promote), he writes of the "alarming...consequence of the alien invasion occurring all over North America that neither I – nor anyone else, I discovered, after checking the scientific literature – had considered. If our native insect fauna cannot, or will not, use alien plants for food, then insect populations in areas with many alien plants will be smaller than insect populations in areas with all natives."

Because insects have co-evolved with plants over millennia, they are specialists in what they can eat. He paraphrases Harvard biologist E. O. Wilson's contention that since insects are fundamental to the food chain of most species, a land without insects is a land without most forms of higher life.

That puts an entirely different cast on the argument for using native plants. After reading that chapter, I saw my gardens in a whole new light. Suddenly the chewed edges of leaves had greater value, if not

"beauty" in the conventional sense. I could forgive the bugs who were dining on things I grow for aesthetics, by seeing them in the larger context. (Well, not the Japanese beetles.)

In her recent book, *Energy-Wise Landscape Design*, Sue Reed writes: "By far and away the primary reason for most of our landscape choices and activities is a desire to create beauty, however we define it." Rather than give up that goal, she recommends expanding our sense of beauty to encompass a larger understanding.

Reed recommends that our definition of beauty be "tempered and informed by knowledge about the true cost of our choices." Her focus is the cost in energy, both active and embedded, of any garden design. However, the same is true for other costs – namely, the health of the larger web of life that is dependent on that landscape.

Beauty has always been an evanescent quality, defined by the habits and customs of the times. ■

Helping Kids Can Open Your Eyes

Introduction by Mark Charles, Wild Ones Seeds for Education Grant Coordinator

Wild Ones members and chapters have supported youth projects at schools, parks, and nature centers since our earliest days. Please consider this in your plans for 2012. One person can make a difference in the lives of many children. A chapter can learn together, and bond in a worthwhile project. As the following story demonstrates, you may be enlightened as well.

Story and photo by Kim Zajac

Reprinted with permission from *Wildflowers*, newsletter of Wildflower Association of Michigan, Summer, 2009.

Sometimes our lives are changed by happenstance, and such was the case with a casual introduction to a woman one day. At the time, three of my children were attending Hugger Elementary School in Rochester, Michigan. As a parent volunteer, I had developed a comfortable working relationship with the principal of the school. My focus was the environment and related projects that all operated under the title H.O.M.E. (Helping Our Mother Earth). But I yearned for a “green space” for our students. The concept was to create an alternative to the traditional classroom. Ideas were simple at the time, perhaps a mammoth sunflower garden with paths and sunflower houses.

Call it serendipity if you like – the person to step forward was a member of the local Oakland Wild Ones Chapter. Maryann Whitman, Wildflower Association of Michigan (WAM) board member, editor of the *Wild Ones Journal*, and local advocate for green-space preservation and education, was interested in my ideas, and ended our first, short conversation by saying, “We’re going to need some money.”

Over the months following our introduction, Maryann and I met to discuss plans. We walked the 22 acres of school property, and identified the ideal location, a barren L-shaped space against the school building, with three Norway maples. Having no background in botany or horticulture, our meetings proved very educational to me. Maryann explored concepts of native plants and their historical significance, as well as the plight of our native plants due to invasive species. A landscape design and a plant list were produced, and my simple idea of a few sunflowers evolved into an “outdoor classroom” with a waterfall and pond.

Students further inspired our design by submitting ideas on scrap bits of paper to the “idea jug.” With administrative support and Maryann’s expertise, we moved forward and submitted the grant proposal for a sun/shade native planting.

Our proposal was accepted, and in March, 2005, I proudly received the Glassen/WAM grant for the Hugger Outdoor Classroom. I became aware of a program called “Ponds for Kids,” and wrote another grant request through our school district to cover expenses. Electrical modifications were covered by a grant from our PTA. Creative financing for fencing materials was covered by bottle drives, paper recycling, and selling recycled juice-pouch purses fabricated by Hugger moms. Community donations of skills and materials lessened our financial burden, and expanded our potential. Together we completed the transformation. The once-ignored



plot of land took on a new identity, the “outdoor classroom.”

Our outdoor classroom continues to mature, and is truly magical. Each spring we measure the emerging milkweed, and look for returning monarchs – perhaps the offspring of the tagged butterflies our students released the previous fall. The white flowers of wild strawberries signal the kindergarteners that we may soon forage for the fruit. And let’s not forget to watch for the fairies that sleep in the Jack-in-the pulpit and

live in the old stump by the pond...it really is enchanted.

We teach our children to “stop, look, and listen” before they cross the street, a lesson applicable to our walk through life. This small “green space” also imparts a life lesson. It slows one’s gait with the invitation to stop, look, and listen. To stop and remember the once barren plot of earth next to our school that now thrives with native plant types that once swayed on the plains with the buffalo. To look more closely and witness the unfurling of ferns and tendrils grasping trellises. To listen, to the water as it dances over the falls and comes to rest in the pool below. Our students are learning to do this.

Our biggest obstacle has been caused by some who never learned the lesson of caring...we have come to know them as “the vandals.” But our success is rooted in our students; their ideas inspired the outdoor classroom, their work established it, and their enthusiasm carries it forward from year to year.

Surprisingly, this project has been as much about human nature as it has been about nature. If ever I feel discouraged, I look into the eyes of 70 first graders eagerly perched on the surrounding fence. As the gate latch opens and children enter the outdoor classroom, we all begin to walk a little slower and gaze a little longer, a practice that will serve us well through life. It is my hope that as our students become better observers of nature, they will grow up to become stewards of our planet. ☘

EDITOR’S NOTE

Kim Zajac was the spark plug, the impetus behind the Hugger Outdoor Classroom. She caught on very quickly that it was no embarrassment to ask for help on behalf of students. She created and nurtured the relationship with the school’s administration and with Mr. Don, of the maintenance staff. Mr. Don did the all-important watering during the summer months when the kids were not at school, and much of the time when the students were in school. She approached the local lumber yard with a request for fencing material; she congregated parents to install the fencing and to collect stones from school’s lot lines (divisions between old farm fields) for the lining of the pond; and (unaided) she wrote the grant request for the pond installation. As her own children move on to middle school, her legacy at Hugger Elementary School lives on, supported by staff and new parents. Kim is now a member of Wild Ones, Oakland Chapter.

Wild Ones Web Site

By Lindsey Lefebvre

Wild Ones makes use of the Internet in many ways. For example, did you know that there is a ready source of information about local nurseries and other environmentally focused companies on the Wild Ones web site? You'll find our current supporting nurseries along with other businesses listed under the Business Member link at wildones.org/members/business/. Another resource is under the Seeds for Education Grant Program link at for-wild.org/SFENurseryPartners.pdf.

Social media: Facebook

Another use of the Internet is through social media. Our e-newsletter via e-mail is a good example. Another is Facebook. Wild Ones member Christian Nelson set up our Facebook page for us, but I have taken it under my wing since I've been here at the headquarters office, and helped expand its offerings.

The Wild Ones Facebook page has been busy collecting fans as the staff at headquarters continues to become more familiar with the popular social networking site. In our photos section we have added many beautiful summer pictures of the WILD Center in full bloom, as well as a few of our even wilder friends who like to visit the grounds. Our page updates the past few months have focused mainly on links that highlight articles and videos on native plants, environmental news, helpful resources, chapter activities that have made the news, and much more. We have also begun adding events, and are trying to initiate discussions. In the future we hope to learn more about the Facebook Causes application, which may help us raise money for programs like Seeds for Education.

Our presence on Facebook can be a valuable tool to grow our organization

Here's how Facebook can spread the word about Wild Ones:

- When a person becomes a fan of Wild Ones, all of that person's friends can see this action on their News Feed (their home page that tells them what their friends have been doing), or on their profile page. Someone who has never heard of Wild Ones may see this and go to our page to learn more about us.
- Many people on Facebook have a large network of friends, and if some of those friends become a fan of our page, their network of friends can see this, which then makes it visible to their network of friends as well.
- If you know someone who might be interested in our Facebook page, you also have the option of posting our page on a friend's wall (the main feed on their profile) by clicking the "Share" option at the bottom of the left-hand column.

Free marketing

The spread of information is practically viral (in a good way). This is free marketing at its best if we continue to stay visible and learn more about the best way to utilize this valuable social tool.

If you are new to Facebook, you can find us easily by clicking on the link found on the Wild Ones web site (for-wild.org – upper right-hand corner) or searching for it right on Facebook. To see the events, discussions, photo albums, and information we have posted, simply click on the appropriate link under our profile picture in the top left of our page. Near the top right, there is also an option to write a recommendation for our organization that others can see.

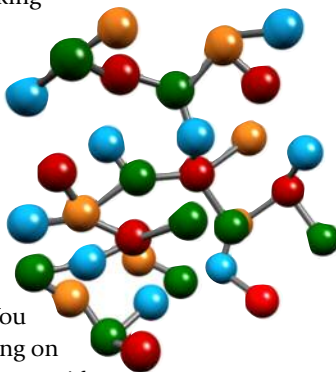
National headquarters isn't the only one joining the social network – many chapters also have Facebook pages. You can visit some of them, and see what they are up to by clicking on their page link under our "Likes" section in the left column. For guidelines on setting up a Wild Ones Facebook page for your chapter, go to wildones.org/facebookguidelines/.

Members-Only Web Pages

Many features can be found on the members-only web pages, including your membership history, the current issues of the *Wild Ones Journal*, the *New Member Handbook*, and voting. 🍷



facebook



How I Became Wild

By Sally Rutzky

Twenty-some years ago I went to a yoga convention in San Francisco. Like all conventions, something was scheduled for every minute. To get away for a bit I took a taxi to the gardens in Golden Gate Park. I remember the immaculate Japanese gardens and the tree ferns. In the botanical garden, the plantings were even more gorgeous. The plants gave the impression of being posed and on display. This was a garden made by great gardeners.

As I wandered farther, I found myself in an enchanted place, subtle rather than spectacular, where the plants seemed to feel "at home." The signage said I was in a garden of plants native to California. Instead of bold tropical colors and forms, the flowers and foliage somehow blended together into a harmonious whole. The sunlight seemed to play with the plants. I sat and absorbed the peaceful energy of the beauty and comfort that was there.

In the Park's Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture I asked the librarian about the "native plants." She smiled, and I thought she was about to hug me – it was California after all – but she didn't. Instead she took me to the shelf where the native-plant book collection was, and apologized because there were only one or two volumes about the Midwest.

She encouraged me to find Wild Ones in Michigan so that I could learn about the place I came from. Bob Grese's phone number was listed in the *Ann Arbor Observer* for a Wild Ones meeting, and my life turned on a dime.

This year my cardinal flowers are almost as tall as I am. 🍷



The Wild Ones Legacy Program

We are pleased that so many of our Wild Ones members have embraced this concept. We have 47 Lifetime Members, six Burr Oak Members, and to-date 165 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 Counsel, 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.

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 _____ percent 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 percent 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. **Acorn Circle** members 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 15 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 4,500 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, or visit our web site at www.wildones.org/. ❧

WILD ONES ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND WORKSHOPS AT THE WILD CENTER

The Weekend

By Jamie Fuerst

Our sincere thanks to the **Fox Valley Area Chapter** for hosting this Annual Meeting at the WILD Center.

After dinner the final night, as it got dark out, the Fox Valley Area Chapter treated the attendees to a screening of the documentary titled "Green Fire." The first full-length, high-definition documentary film made about legendary environmentalist **Aldo Leopold**. Thanks to the wonderful weather that we had all weekend, we were able to watch this video outside. **Karen Syverson and her husband, Mike**, hung a sheet on the side of the building, and set up the projector and speaker system. Viewing the movie under the stars was wonderful. As if on cue, just when the speaker in the film was telling us how Aldo came to buy the shack (to save the habitat for the cranes) near Baraboo, Wisconsin, a flock of geese flew over.

It was a wonderful weekend all around: Good weather, good food, good friends.

Note from Executive Director Donna VanBuecken: Our thanks to **Karen Syverson**, national board member and **Jamie Fuerst**, recently named our Marketing Assistant. The organization of the weekend was primarily Karen's, while the workshops were primarily Jamie's. Both deserve a hearty round of applause and congratulations for a job well done.



Annual Meeting and Workshop August 19-21, 2011

By Jamie Fuerst

History

The **Grow Wild Ones Marketing Plan** established five objectives for the organization.

1. Increase public awareness of the Wild Ones organization and mission.
2. Establish Wild Ones and our web site (www.wildones.org) as the place to go for information and education on native plants and natural landscaping, assistance with local government and ordinances, and as an educational resource for teachers and the next generation.
3. Improve the member-retention rate, and increase the average membership level.
4. Increase total membership by 15 percent per year over the next five years.
5. Influence more members of the general public to take a different approach to landscaping whether including a few natives or going hog-wild.

These objectives need to be accomplished through the work of everyone – National, chapters, and partners-at-large. In the tactical section of the marketing plan we have one section dedicated to "Chapter Development."

So the questions became, how do we help the chapters develop and grow? Also, **Executive Director Donna VanBuecken** consistently points out that, "This chapter did this so well," and "That chapter did a great job on that." So, we put the two together, and developed a plan whereby the chapter leaders could learn from each other.



WILD ONES ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND WORKSHOPS AT THE WILD CENTER

The Workshops

By Jamie Fuerst

Eight workshops were scheduled over Saturday and Sunday. Sixty-two participants representing 22 chapters participated.

We had asked three to four chapter board and committee members to be moderators at each of the workshops. Thanks to **Linda Porter** from the **Lexington (KY) Chapter**, who helped me the week prior to the meeting, we had some instructions for the moderators. We asked the groups of moderators to get together before their individual workshops and discuss these duties and the ultimate output from the workshops. Thank you to all our moderators.

Workshop 1: Join the Group: Increasing Membership

Linda Porter, Lexington (KY)
Sherrie Snyder, Illinois Prairie
Carol & Bob Niendorf, Fox Valley Area (WI)
Marilyn Jones, Twin Cities (MN)

Workshop 2: Volunteers Are Us

Constance McCarthy, Rock River Valley (IL)
Deb Wolterman, Greater Cincinnati (OH)
Ed Schmidt, St. Louis (MO)

Workshop 3: Partnering, Smartnering

Constance McCarthy, Rock River Valley (IL)
Bonnie Harper-Lore, PAL (MN)
Julia Vanatta, Twin Cities (MN)
Debi Wolterman, Greater Cincinnati (OH)

Workshop 5: Chapter Publicity

Julia Vanatta, Twin Cities (MN)
Janet Carlson, Fox Valley Area (WI)
Linda Grishaber, Fox Valley Area (WI)

Workshop 6: Stop the Leak: Renewing Memberships

Virginia Watson, Rock River Valley (IL)
Carol & Bob Niendorf, Fox Valley Area (WI)
Linda Porter, Lexington (KY)

Workshop 7: Sustaining & Renewing Chapters

Marty Rice, Twin Cities (MN)
Kris Kauth, Fox Valley Area (WI)
Janice Hand, Lake-to-Prairie (IL)
Ed Schmidt, St. Louis (MO)

Workshop 8: Plant Sales

Steve Windsor, Greater DuPage (IL)
Sharon Ziebert, Fox Valley Area (WI)
Tim Lewis, Rock River Valley (IL)

All notes from the workshops will be collated and made available both on our web site and in coming issues of the *Wild Ones Journal*.



WILD ONES ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND WORKSHOPS AT THE WILD CENTER

Heard From the Attendees

The WILD Center looks great! What a terrific job you all have done! Not only was the weekend up there thought provoking, but also horticulturally inspiring. In our area we have to do some traveling to find native plants for sale, but after making the trip to the WILD Center, I am now working on a new butterfly garden. I really appreciate the mental motivation as well as the environmental encouragement! – **Ginnie Watson, Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter**

The 2011 annual meeting of Wild Ones offered so much more than I expected. In addition to some exciting previews of things to come, such as a newly designed web site, the meeting offered a prairie full of interesting activities, beautiful gardens, great food, and participant-led workshops. Most of all, I collected a toolbox of wonderful ideas to take back to my chapter. Can't wait until next year. – **Linda Porter, Lexington (KY) Chapter**

Even though our chapter is well established, I still came away with a head full of ideas on how to make our chapter stronger than ever. I was also very happy to be able to share with some of the newer and smaller chapters the things that our chapter does well. It was nice to finally be able to put faces to many of the names of officers from other chapters who have been so helpful and willing to share in the past, via phone or e-mail. – **Constance McCarthy, Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter**

Workshops were geared toward building chapters, and were unique for having lots of different viewpoints and advice that different chapter members have used to encourage people to join.

I am a PAL member, and I was very impressed by the knowledge and experience brought to the workshops. I enjoyed the networking part the most, meeting members from many different chapters, swapping ideas.

The support of being around so many people with beliefs similar to mine was invigorating. – **Katrina Hayes, PAL (TN), National Board Member**

Inspirational. Seeing the WILD Center evolve over the years into a fabulous demonstration of a sustainable landscape. Absorbing the enthusiasm of the participants. Re-affirming *why* I choose to take the path less traveled. Well worth the seven-hour drive. – **Deb Wolterman, Greater Cincinnati (OH) Chapter**

A most productive two days. What an experience. It was great to see so many people connecting, sharing ideas, and offering support – all with the idea of growing Wild Ones. I learned a lot that I will share with my chapter board. Chapter leaders who attended the conference need to share what they learned and in turn, members should support, encourage, and help the leaders grow their chapters. – **Tim Lewis, Rock River (IL) Chapter, Wild Ones National President**

What a wonderful experience! This was my first Wild Ones Annual Meeting (and my first trip to the WILD Center), and I left convinced that I just have to attend each year. I found that I better understand Wild Ones after seeing how well we are represented by our “national headquarters,” both the building and the immediate gardens. The larger property is inspiring in itself, and represents our organization perfectly. Plus, I was able to meet our national officers and board in person – impressive, each one.

As to the sessions, I typed up my notes when I returned – 10 pages of tips and ideas on what works and doesn't work, from other chapters. That's a lot of value from less than three days of time and a pleasant drive. When I returned, I immediately shared with our board what I had learned. We now have a rather long list of things to implement.

Thank you to Donna and Jamie, and all who worked so hard on the meeting. Well worth it!” – **Janice Hand, Lake-to-Prairie (IL) Chapter**



WILD ONES ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND WORKSHOPS AT THE WILD CENTER

Catherine Zimmerman

Catherine Zimmerman, one of our new Honorary Directors, attended the Annual meeting weekend. She sent this note:

In the March/April issue of the *Wild Ones Journal*, Wild Ones National President, Tim Lewis, asked the question, “Where do you get your inspiration?” Tim described the incredible rise of the national park system through the hard work of dedicated visionaries, and went on to talk about Wild Ones’ efforts to create natural habitats. “We (Wild Ones) are providing sanctuaries, one by one, for thousands of species. We don’t know for sure, but we could be preserving species that could otherwise vanish forever.”

Just that sentence alone inspired me. It reminded me that individual efforts to restore ecosystems are cumulative, and have a positive influence on the land. My meadow garden out back makes a significant difference to the birds, bees, butterflies, wasps, bats, soil organisms, and many more species that occupy that niche. The cacophony of chirping birds and the busy hum of insects outside my door is proof – if you plant it, they will come – because they *do* need a sanctuary.

As a new, honorary director, I was inspired to take a drive to meet other Wild Ones at the annual membership meeting at the WILD Center. It was a beautiful trip from Maryland, and gave me an opportunity to visit family mid-way in Ohio. The warm welcome I received when I finally arrived at the WILD Center was like another family reunion. I was coming home to people who share a vision that native plants and natural landscapes are not only beautiful, but produce diverse ecosystem services vital to the quality of our land, food, and water.

Over the two days I attended, I was impressed by my fellow Wild Ones’ energy and organization at the national headquarters and in the local chapters. During the workshops, everyone was encouraged to share new ideas, and reflect on successful strategies for increasing membership, starting new chapters, and partnering with like-minded organizations to increase exposure to the Wild Ones mission.

I was wowed by the WILD Center. What an inspirational setting for the membership meeting! The building is beautiful, and surrounded by prairie gardens, rain gardens, and woods. It exemplifies the Wild Ones mission.

I left energized and proud to be a Wild One. I just finished writing a blog piece for Native Plants and Wild Life Gardens, “In Praise of the Wild Ones”: nativeplantwildlifegarden.com/in-praise-of-wild-ones.

My goal is to spread the word and encourage new chapters in my neck of the woods.



Notes from the WILD Center

By Zaiga Freivalds

To see some slideshows of what's happening at the WILD Center, go to wildones.org/eco/center/photoexpo. And if you're ever in the area, plan to stop by for a visit. We'd love to show you around.

This summer at the WILD Center we have a bounty of beautiful native flowers and grasses to host a variety of pollinators. It has been awesome to watch, and so rewarding to know that we're accomplishing one of our goals. Some things we've learned:

Recovery from the hail storm. The hail storm-damaged plants have recovered, are blooming profusely, and are attracting multitudes of pollinators. In addition to the lovely butterflies, we see many other insect species, which love our native forbs. On sunny days the plants are humming with activity.

Deer and apples. The deer visit our gardens, especially the doe and her two spotted fawns, but so far the damage is minimal. They love the apples from the three apple trees near the parking lot, which will remain in our over-all landscape plan for as long as they are healthy.

Volunteers are invaluable.

Volunteers are wonderful as they continue to clean up the holding beds and move more plants into the gardens. They worked hard to spruce up the area for the recent Annual Membership Meeting and the first-ever Chapter Development Weekend.

The landscape plan. The development of the overall landscape plan has required much discussion and research to establish the guidelines. The plan, along with the guidelines and possible plant list for future plantings, can be found at wildones.org/eco/center/wolandscapes/currentlandscapeplans.html.

Majestic eagles. The nesting bald eagles have been hiding recently, but they did choose the perfect moment to fly over as the Annual Membership Meeting participants were beginning the tour of the gardens. Though the eagles are becoming more common in the Wisconsin area, to us as well as to visitors, it is still a majestic bird to behold.



The oak savanna, turtles, and shortgrass prairie. The planting of the oak savanna may be delayed so we can establish the turtle-nesting habitat near Little Lake Butte des Morts first. However, the shortgrass prairie is still on schedule for planting this fall, thanks in part to a huge donation of plants from Prairie Nursery.

First Thursdays. One of our volunteers suggested that we set aside the first Thursday of each month as a firm work day at the Center. So in July we implemented First Thursdays for members as well as community volunteers, and at 7 p.m. we all share potluck. It's been a wonderful way to network and share what we are all learning while maintaining the WILD Center site.

Chapter work days. In addition to the many work hours the Fox Valley Area Chapter members put in at the WILD Center, we are thankful for the efforts of other chapters as well. Wolf River, Green Bay and Root River Chapters all have scheduled fall work days at the Center. ■

Nina Leopold Bradley (1917-2011) *Requiescat in Pace*

Nina Leopold Bradley (1917-2011), the third of five children of Aldo Leopold, died recently at her home near Baraboo, Wisconsin. She was born in New Mexico, but beginning in 1935, Nina spent many weekends with her family at the Leopold shack near Baraboo, participating in one of the world's first wildland-restoration projects, in what is now part of the Leopold Memorial Reserve.

Along with her second husband, Charles Bradley, she established the Bradley Study Center on the Leopold Reserve, along the Wisconsin River, in 1976. This work included creation of a graduate ecological research program in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin, and expansion of the land restoration and phenological observation that the Leopold family had begun so many years ago.

The work of Nina and Charles was instrumental in the establishment of the internationally recognized Aldo Leopold Foundation and the construction of the Leopold Center.

Nina will be remembered in her own right, as a scientist in the field of environmental conservation and as a speaker at environmentally focused conferences and seminars, including those presented by Wild Ones. When she spoke at the opening of the Aldo Leopold Legacy Center in April of 2007, Buddy Huffaker – the executive director – introduced her as the “spiritual leader” of the Aldo Leopold Foundation. The foundation “works to weave a land ethic into the fabric of our society; to advance the understanding, stewardship and restoration of land health; and to cultivate leadership for conservation.” ■



WILD Center Wish List

Volunteers to help with all sorts of things: Cataloging and arranging library materials • Weeding demonstration gardens • Recording bird and critter sightings
 Removing buckthorn • Restoring woodland understory and overstory
 Installing birdhouses.

Stuff: Computer (less than four years old) • Flat Screen for Computer
 First-Aid Kit • Four-Rung Stepladder • Small Dresser • Gardening Tools
 Household Tools • Native Trees and Shrubs • Canoe or Kayak
 Brush Cutter or Brush Hog • Tall-Grass and Short-Grass Prairie Seed
 1/4-HP Motor for Seed Sorter • Desk Suitable for Office • Guest Chairs
 Trees (6 to 8 ft.): Basswood, maple, and oak (bur, white, and swamp white oak)
 Woodland plants: Grasses, ephemerals, ferns, etc.

*Contact the National Office if you have other items that may be suitable for use at the WILD Center. We now have someone in the office from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Friday.
 Or just call for an appointment: 877-394-9453.*

Letter to the editor: About being a purist

I read the "Notes From The President" in the July/August 2011 issue of the *Wild Ones Journal*. I have been planting natives since 1994, and have a small prairie in my front yard as well as many other native plantings around my house and back yard. Most of my yard is in native woodland, shrubs, and trees – as well as savanna or prairies.

Do I consider myself a purist? I suppose so, but only because I love native plants and the beauty and environmental value they have. I also fly-fish. I only fish dry flies. Do I consider myself a dry fly purist? Yes, only because I love fishing for trout and seeing them raise to a dry fly.

I don't consider "purist" necessarily as being negative, as long as one is not arrogant and self-righteous about it.

Jack Saltes, Madison (WI) Chapter

Wild Ones National President, Tim Lewis responds: Thank you for your thoughts, Jack. I agree that purist is not necessarily negative. However, most people associate the term with the arrogant attitude that some folks have. I want people to understand that the best way of getting the uninformed to try native plants in their yards is to show them that they can plant natives among their non-native perennials.

Looking for judges

Looking for something to do to share your knowledge about gardening and native plants? Then volunteer to judge the applications submitted for the SFE Grant Program. The Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program began in 1996, and since then we have awarded \$50,132 for 127 outdoor learning centers. But we can't make this program work without judges to assist us in reviewing the grant applications. It doesn't take too much time – approximately four hours – and can be done right from your home Internet connection. Contact the headquarters office if you'd like to offer your assistance. 877-394-9453 or sfeapplication@wildones.org.

Donations needed for SFE grant program

Outdoor Learning Centers. What a great way to introduce children to the environment. By donating to the Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program, you can help us create these opportunities for our young people. Every year we give grants away to schools and other not-for-profits from the donations we receive from our Wild Ones members. So don't forget to include the SFE Grant program in your gift giving for the year. Send your donation now to Wild Ones SFE, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912.

WILD Center needs your extra prairie seed

If you have extra prairie seed this fall, and you'd like to find a great place to donate it to, think of the WILD Center. We will be developing our oak savanna and mesic prairies next year, and we are looking for native seed appropriate for planting these areas in Wisconsin. Thanks to Harmon and Karla Seaver we have a Maytag seed sorter, so you don't even have to sort the seeds. We can do that here at the WILD Center. For more information, contact wildcenter@wildones.org or call 877-394-9453.

Wild Ones Annual Photo Contest: It's time for you to vote.

The photographers have chosen their subjects. They've clicked the shutters. They've done the prep work for each photo. And they've officially entered the contest. And now, the entries for the Wild Ones Photo Contest are online and ready for viewing – and ready for you to help choose the "best of show" – the one photo judged the "People's Choice."

We always have a great variety of fabulous photos, but this year's shots look better than ever – and there are so many of them.

With lots of great photos to choose from, making your selection for "People's Choice" may not be easy, but it's sure to be fun.

If you love native plants and natural landscaping – if you're "into" photography – or if you just like pretty pictures – you need to take a look.

Come and view the photos. Narrow your choices down to the one you think is best. And then cast your vote. Don't wait too long though – all votes must be in by October 29.

Go to for-wild.org/members/photo.cgi to view the photos and make your choice.



- Our culture has taught us to look at nature as an “ideal picture” rather than a “process.” Therefore, if a natural landscape looks picturesque or “as pretty as a picture,” we often identify it as having high ecological quality.

These three perceptions color how people interpret native landscapes placed in urban and suburban environments.

Conventions of human landscapes

Largely, our perceptions define the accepted conventions of human landscapes. Just like the clothes we choose to wear, the landscape we put in front of our house is a reflection of ourselves. Thus people use landscapes to glean information about others. In Nassauer’s article, she states that, “Human inhabited landscapes operate...as communication systems (Lynch 1971)¹, and above all other information, *people seek information about other people* when they experience the [home] landscape.”

So, what do the elements of a yard’s design mean to most Americans?

Nassauer explains: “The dominant culture in much of North America reads a neat, orderly landscape as a sign of neighborliness, hard work, and pride.” *Neat* and *orderly* could be translated into mown lawn, trimmed shrubs, and well-tended flowers in designated flower beds. If a yard is designed for ecological benefits and doesn’t contain these elements, it could be perceived as messy. It sends negative signals that the homeowner isn’t caring for his/her yard, and is, therefore, not neighborly, not hard working, and doesn’t have any pride. While we know this isn’t necessarily just or true, it’s important to understand the interpretation our culture makes of how a home landscape is seen.

A seemingly conflicting finding

Nassauer notes that, “A large body of landscape perception research...leaves no doubt that people prefer to see landscapes that they perceive as natural.” However, “too much nature” is unappealing.

ABOUT JOAN IVERSON NASSAUER

Joan Iverson Nassauer is Professor of Landscape Architecture in the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She focuses on the cultural sustainability of ecological design in human-dominated landscapes. Her research offers knowledge and strategies for basing ecological design on cultural insight, strong science, and creative engagement with policy. Her teaching and recent projects apply this approach to brownfields, vacant property, exurban sprawl, and agricultural landscapes. For more information on Professor Nassauer’s work and a link to her writings mentioned here, visit her web site at: personal.umich.edu/~nassauer/index.html.

Thus, even though people say they prefer natural landscapes, what they are really saying is that they prefer landscapes that meet their “pretty as a picture ideal” of what nature should look like, and that ideal includes signs of human intention and neatness.

So why is neatness so important? “Neatness,” Nassauer explains, “is interpreted as a sign of sociable human intention. Neatness cannot be mistaken for untended nature; it means a person has been in a place and returns frequently. It means a place is under the care of a person.” Therefore, native landscapers practicing their art in an urban/suburban setting need to provide viewers with visual cues that communicate that the landscape is cared for, that the homeowner intends it to look this way, and that it shows elements of neatness. In other words, to provide a “cultural frame for viewing nature” (or landscapes designed with native plants) in a new way.

Studying the situation

To get a better idea of what signals in a landscape communicate care, intention, and neatness, Nassauer conducted a study in a suburban community of Minneapolis-St. Paul. In this study, she asked participants to rate seven computer-simulated landscapes that progressively increased in ecological complexity. The simulations started with a conventional suburban landscape, and then progressively covered the lawn with beds of native plants. Both an oak savanna community and a prairie grass community were used. The last simulation showed the conventional yard covered

in weeds.

Raters preferred the conventional landscape the most. But a close second was the yard covered 50 percent by the oak savanna plant community. The oak savanna plants were in garden beds “framed” by the lawn. Nassauer concludes that “...novel suburban landscapes are more likely to be attractive if they look neat and well cared for.”

The five criteria used in the study included: Attractiveness, care, neatness, naturalness, and apparent need for maintenance. The association of these five characteristics to each other sheds light on what can make a suburban landscape attractive. On the conventional landscape end of the



Cues that indicate human intention are cultural symbols that can be used to frame more novel ecosystems in inhabited landscapes. Using “cues to care” in design is not a means of maintaining traditional landscape forms, but rather a means of adapting cultural expectations to recognize new landscape forms that include greater biodiversity. “Cues to care” make the novel familiar, and associate ecosystems, which may look messy, with unmistakable indications that the landscape is part of a larger intended pattern.

spectrum (up to and including the 50 percent native plants), these landscapes were considered neat and cared for, and therefore attractive. The 50 percent native landscape’s “naturalness” qualities also made it attractive. However, more than 50 percent native plants, or obvious lack of care (weedy lawn) made a landscape unattractive. These results “support the conclusion that ‘neatness’ labels a landscape as well cared for, and that ‘naturalness’ is defined by cultural expectations. Trees, shrubs, flowers, and grasses look attractive unless there is ‘too much.’ Then the immediate cues to care, the presence of human intention, are lost.”

Applying the lessons learned

How can native landscapers apply the results of Nassauer’s research? How can we make our yards – that are full of native plants serving the environment – appeal to our neighbors? How can we help this new landscape design form to become the new “conventional”?

Nassauer contends that, “Cues that indicate human intention are cultural symbols that can be used to frame more novel ecosystems in inhabited landscapes. Using “cues to care” in design is not a means of maintaining traditional landscape forms but rather a means of adapting cultural expectations to recognize new landscape forms that include greater biodiversity. “Cues to care” make the novel familiar, and associate ecosystems, which may look messy, with unmistakable indications that the landscape is part of a larger intended pattern.”

Her suburban research uncovered several ways to indicate care when we design our yards with native plants:

Mowing Mown strips along bordering properties, pathways, driveways, or sidewalks help to indicate that your yard is cared for. A mown strip along a property boundary or sidewalk helps prevent tall plants (which sometimes flop over) from infringing on your neighbor’s property or interfering with people walking along the sidewalk.

Flowering plants and trees Nassauer’s research suggests that the small flowers of some native plants “tend to be misunderstood as weeds.” Therefore, plant an “unnaturally high” proportion of plants with larger, brighter flowers at least for the first few seasons. People also tend to appreciate trees more than shrubs or tall grasses.

Wildlife feeders and houses People may not be able to identify a bird’s habitat requirements, or like these habitats when they see them. However, they associate birdhouses and feeders with something they like. Add them to the planting.

Bold patterns Nassauer’s research on farmland has revealed that large areas with bold patterns, such as terracing or grassed



waterways (practiced for soil-conservation purposes) indicate care to farmers and non-farmers alike. This is true even on a smaller scale, showing care through crisp edges. Rick Meader, landscape architect and Ann Arbor Chapter Wild One’s member, wrote an article that talks about the edges he incorporated into his home landscape. For his experiences with “cues to care,” read his post at annarbor.com/home-garden/is-it-a-weed-patch-or-a-garden/.

Trimmed shrubs, plants in rows, linear planting designs

All these practices indicate human intention and care.

Fences, architectural details, lawn ornaments, fresh paint

Well-maintained structures, such as homes, fences, and sheds indicate a property is cared for, and reflects positively on the landscape. Garden ornaments, and architectural details such as flower boxes or shutters also show human intention on a property. In the Midwest, the color white on buildings and fences is closely associated with care.

Foundation planting Plants along the foundation of a home are almost as sacred to the American landscape language, as is the lawn. Nassauer notes that this “nearly unassailable cultural expectation for the home landscape” should cover the foundation, but not get in the way of windows or doors. They should not obstruct views and lines of vision.

Let your landscape do the talking

Nassauer’s work enlightens us as to what we, as advocates of ecological landscaping, can do to spread the “word.” Using the “cues to care” techniques in our yards will speak to each passerby in a language that he or she understands, telling each that our native plantings are an intentional expression of how we value nature and what it does for us. We can hope that these familiar reflections of care will draw people into our landscapes, and give us all an opportunity to start conversations about how native plants can benefit our homes, neighborhoods, and communities. 🌱

Footnote:

Lynch, K. 1971. *Site Planning*. 2d ed. Cambridge: MIT Press.

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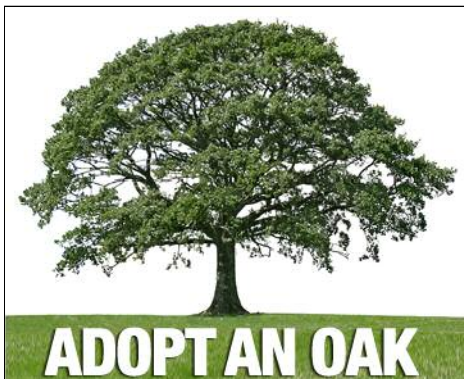
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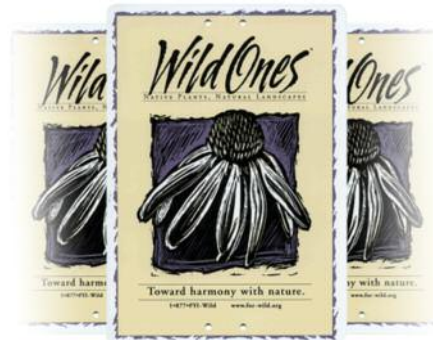
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Correction to July/August 2011 *Journal* listing for Midwest Ground Covers, LLC and Natural Garden Natives. We incorrectly listed their chapter affiliation which is Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter.



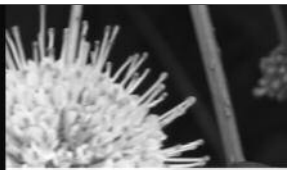
We will be developing our upland area into an oak savanna, and are offering members the opportunity to donate toward the installation of the bur oaks that will eventually form the canopy for the savanna. Although any donation will be appreciated, for a donation of \$200 or more, we will add your name to our Bur Oak Plaque denoting benefactors of the Oak Savanna. To participate in this project, send your donation made out to Wild Ones Oak Savanna to:
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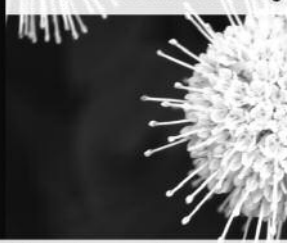
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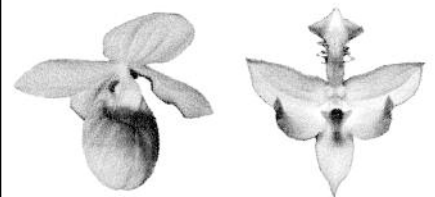
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Northern Kane County (IL) 2 years
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Mid-Missouri 11 years
Central Wisconsin (WI) 11 years
Kalamazoo (MI) 12 years
St. Louis (MO) 13 years
Menomonee River Area (WI) 14 years
Lake-To-Prairie (IL) 15 years
Fox Valley Area (WI) 17 years
Green Bay (WI) 20 years

One Lucky Man By Janet Allen

My husband is one lucky man. Most wives want expensive jewelry, luxury vacations, or matching furniture. I'm delighted when my husband presents me with trash rescued from the curb.

He doesn't even have to wait for a special occasion. I accept these gifts as they arrive, and they fulfill birthday, anniversary, Christmas, and other obligations. The unpredictability of getting these treasures as he spots them coming home from work only adds to the enjoyment.

Of course, I don't want just any trash – only valuable things like logs, stones, top-soil, leaves, even broken flowerpots.

The logs he lugged home make a perfect edging for the paths wandering through my lawnless yard of planting beds. They complement the natural look of our landscape, and will provide years of enjoyment watching them decay and return to the earth.

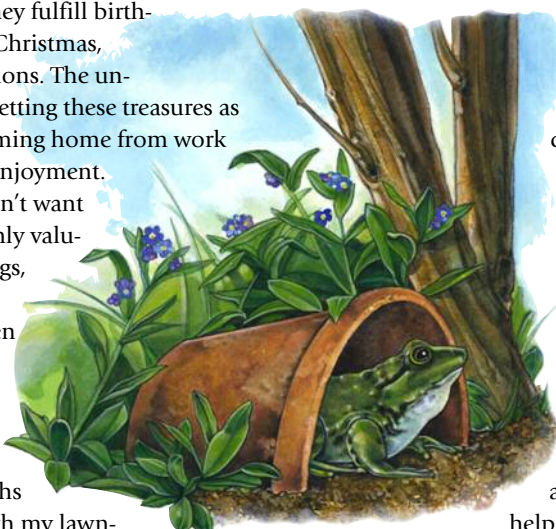
Stones are always a good gift, but one that sometimes requires my assistance. On a recent Friday night "date," we collected two van loads of stones discarded at the curb. They now grace the sidewalk leading to our backdoor.

Topsoil is a special treat. Our development had once been farmland, with rich topsoil that took centuries to create. Yet, when neighbors created a patio, they piled this resource at the curb as trash. My husband presented me with many loads of this rescued treasure. A priceless gift.

Available only in autumn are leaves. One can never have too many dead leaves. My husband fills dozens of giant yard bags with leaves gathered from the piles lining our street. It was like Christmas in October one year when he saw a town dump truck full of leaves, and he asked the driver to dump his entire load in our front yard. My husband ground some of that leaf mountain into mulch for my planting beds, and piled the rest into huge circles of fencing. In a year or two, they became humus – a gift delayed, but worth the wait.

And that broken flowerpot? True, it was useless for flowers, but turned upside down, its missing side became the perfect doorway for a cozy toad abode.

I've appreciated all these gifts, but I do have one as-yet-unfulfilled wish: A dead tree. We had foolishly cut down trees damaged in a storm a few years ago. We didn't yet know their value as nesting cavities for woodpeckers or as an insect "meat market" for nuthatches.



Ever since I learned that dead trees can be planted" in concrete, I've longed for this addition to my habitat garden.

I hope my husband notices all those unlucky husbands nervously eyeing expensive jewelry or pondering clothing styles and sizes. It will

help him forget the effort and sometimes the embarrassment of lugging home all those gifts. And will remind him that, truly, he's one lucky man. ☘

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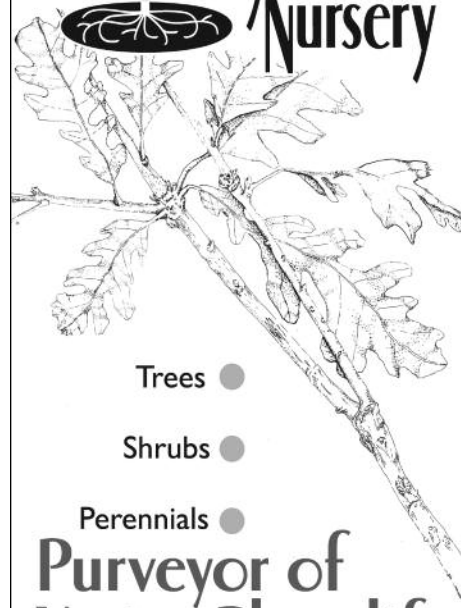


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FLYING HIGH



This hot-air balloon, shot from the grounds of the WILD Center, wasn't part of the Annual Meeting/Conference, but the free-flying balloon seems to typify the spirit of the weekend for all who attended on a perfect August weekend.

Mark Your Calendars

November 12: Wild Ones 4th Quarterly Board Meeting

Via webconference on November 12, 2011 at 9 a.m. All members are invited to participate. Contact wildcenter@wildones.org for details.

October 15: Natural Landscaping With Native Plants – Make Your Yard an Enchanting Place

Presented by the Milwaukee chapters of Wild Ones, at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee. Keynote will be Wild Ones Honorary Director, Douglas W. Tallamy, professor and chair of the Department of Entomology and wildlife ecology and director of the Center for Managed Ecosystems at the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware, where he has authored numerous articles and taught taxonomy, behavioral ecology, and other courses for 30 years.

March 4, 5, 2012: Using Native Plants in Your Landscape:

Preserve the Legacy Wildflower Association of Michigan 25th Annual Conference at the Kellogg Center at Michigan State University, in East Lansing, Michigan. Keynote speaker, Steve Buchmann. Subject: Pollinators. Adjunct workshop for educators on March 4. www.wildflowersmich.org.

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How You Can Help. When planning a long vacation, or a move, please mail your address information to Wild Ones, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912, call toll-free at 877-394-9453, or go to the Wild Ones members-only pages at www.for-wild.org. Click on item 2 (Update Personal Membership Info) and enter the appropriate changes. *Thanks!*

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DONATION – IN-KIND

Carol S. Kropidowski Central Wisconsin Chapter – Leatherwood shrubs
Ed Pahl Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – Transportation of many donated seedling oaks
Philip Peterson Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – Digging up and delivering leatherwood and winterberry shrubs
Chris Daleiden Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – Many seedling oaks
Peck Dave & Sue Sun Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – Plants (queen-of-the-prairie, penstemon, cup plant), shade plants (baneberry, jack-in-the-pulpit, wild geranium)
Carolyn Larkin Menomonee River Area (WI) Chapter – Variety of trees and shrubs used in restoring the woodland
Menomonee River Area (WI) Chapter Variety of trees and shrubs used in restoring the woodland
Bob & Sue Marx and **R. J. Marx** Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – Two turtle-crossing signs

DONATION – IN-KIND – ANNUAL MEETING

Neil Diboll - Prairie Nursery Central Wisconsin Chapter – Black-eyed Susan seeds
David Muench - Fox Cities Greenways Pens, maps, and sample newsletters
Michael Kading - Town of Menasha Time to guide a tour of the Friendship Trestle Trail
Thomas Traxler Jr. - Marshland Transplant Aquatic Nursery Pale purple coneflower and black-eyed Susan seeds
Donna VanBuecken - Accent on Natural Landscaping Inc. Donation of cheese for the Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter
Ron Wolff - Lake Shore Cleaners Inc. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – No-mow grass seed
Dawneen Berthold - American National Bank Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter – Fox Cities pens and bookmarks
Rod Stoffel - JP Graphics Inc. Pads of paper
Pat & Ceci Kiefer - Stone Silo Prairie Gardens LLP Green Bay (WI) Chapter – Forty pale purple coneflower plants
Marcia Herzfeldt - Hillshire Farms, Division of Sara Lee Food & Beverage Summer sausage and sliced ham