

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement

Wild Ones®

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

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Notes from the President:
I too have a dream. 2

Dues increase. 3

Wisconsin Roots: Staying
in touch with the land
doesn't have to involve a shovel. 4

The Redbud: A colorful native tree for
spring. 5

Next Generation: A slow walk with a red
glove. 6

Grapevine:
Communication and
easy-to-understand
explanations are
important. 7

No Existence, Only
Coexistence: Gardening for the good of
biodiversity. 8

Seeds for Education: Project Buddy. 9

Wild Ones 2011 photo contest. 10

When will Nature finally receive her due?
12

Rethinking urban rain
gardens. 13

WILD Center wish list. 15

It's all in the way we talk.
15

A cautionary tale about milkweed. 16

Wild Ones has new national directors on
its board. 16

The Meeting Place: Chapter contact
information. 20

Thank you. 22

The Wild Ones Journal
goes private. 23

The Wild Ones Store. 29

Mark Your Calendar: Upcoming board
meetings, conferences, etc. 29

Denise Meehan, our newest Ecoscaper.
Back cover



A fallen or cut "nurse log" provides shelter and food for soil organisms, insects, seedlings, birds, and other creatures. Illustration © Amelia Hansen.

Wild Ones as Second Life

THE ART OF RESTORING COMMUNITY

By Tom Small In October of 2009, when my wife, Nancy, had only a month left to live, I left her for a few minutes to make a brief appearance at the meeting of our Wild Ones chapter here in Kalamazoo. I asked her if there was anything she'd like for me to tell everyone. "Yes," she said. "Tell them that Wild Ones gave me a second life."

Nancy's second life

One result of that second life is the book I've just finished, Nancy's book, *Using Native Plants to Restore Community in Southwest Michigan and Beyond*.

Both the life and the book began in 1996, the year after Nancy and I married and retired from college teaching, the year she read Sara Stein's *Noah's Garden*, which she recognized immediately was to be the crucial discovery and luminous inspiration in our quest for what our marriage and our life together would be devoted to. Thus we undertook to live, together, what we both called our second life, dedicated to saving and restoring some of the degraded and lost biodiversity of southwest Michigan, to creating natural habitat for the distressed creatures of the Earth and the air.

Being teachers for most of our lives, we not only began the transformation of our own yard into natural habitat, we began to spread our message by means of talks, slide programs, plant lists, enumerations of the joys and benefits of natural landscaping, essays, and notes in environmental journals and newsletters. Then, in 1999, we established the Kalamazoo Area

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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

I too have a dream



I am writing this on Martin Luther King's birthday, so I thought it fitting to borrow a thought from him. Although not as insightful as the reverend's, I have a dream for Wild Ones. This is just a partial list of my vision:

- Wild Ones will be present everywhere in the United States (including my home state of Montana) and Canada.

- We will have 4,000 household members by 2014, and will continue to grow by at least 10 percent each year.
- Wild Ones will lead the native-plant movement, through education.
- Wild Ones will provide the tools and resources to chapters and partners-at-large to help spread the word to others.
- Provide grants to chapters for high-profile speakers and keynote speakers at conferences.
- Provide educational programs for teachers who want to establish native-plant gardens for education.
- Strengthen our financial stability.

The fact is, our growth has remained modest over the past decade. We managed to increase membership last year largely because we had temporary staff to help our regular staff. Yet the slow growth is a clear indication that things have to change or Wild Ones will not be standing among the organizations that make a difference for our environment. Complacency is our enemy, so we

have to do extraordinary things in the *next* decade, starting this year. We have to improve the way we have been doing things.

We need to have the financial and staffing resources necessary for us to be the organization that encourages people to join us.

As I read my list of dreams I ask myself what things do we need to do this year to achieve our dreams? What has to improve? What has to change? What dreams are achievable with the staff and funds that we have right now? Then I ask myself what are the things that get in the way of achieving these goals? I come to the conclusion that Wild Ones needs to have the financial and staffing resources that are necessary for us to be the organization that encourages people to join us – because we are doing the right thing for the Earth.

My dreams are just that, mine. Yet I know that many of you have the same dreams for Wild Ones. These are things that I will keep in the forefront of my mind throughout the year.

I am convinced that we can achieve our dreams because Wild Ones is a community of native-plant enthusiasts who are passionate about native-plant landscaping. I *know* you want to share that passion with others. We all want to be members of a successful organization and share our dreams all over our country. It can only happen if we work on the challenges ahead of us, together – as One. *

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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It was not an easy decision...but...

It's finally time for an increase in dues

We've held the line on dues for over ten years now, but if we want Wild Ones to continue and to improve, an increase is necessary.

To all members of Wild Ones, At recent meetings of the Wild Ones National Board, a decision was passed to raise membership dues in the Wild Ones organization. Effective March 1, 2012, the membership dues will be increased, as shown in the chart on this page:

This action was not taken easily: It followed some months of discussion of our finances in the face of increasingly tight budgets. We considered reducing the number of pages and issues of the *Wild Ones Journal*; restructuring dues sharing with chapters; assessing a percentage of retained chapter assets; promoting more advertising in the *Journal*, and several other options of lesser value. We also carefully considered arguments against raising dues.

Our last dues increase happened over 10 years ago when we went from \$20 to

Wild Ones Membership Dues as of March 1, 2012		
Membership category	Current dues	New dues
Individual or Household	\$30	\$37
Business	\$200	\$250
Non-profit Affiliate	\$75	\$90
Professional/Educator	\$75	\$90
Limited income/Student	\$20	\$20
Lifetime Membership	\$1,200	\$1,500

\$30. At that time, it was argued that membership numbers would suffer. It's hard to tell what numbers might have dropped out because of the increase; we do know that in August 2001, our membership was at 2,959, and at 3,077 in November of 2011. We also know that the organization would have foundered without the dues increase in 2001. This remains our current fear, again.

Members may well ask, "So where is the money going?"

Most notably, we have added 13 chapters (a 37 percent increase) since 2001, while membership has remained essentially the same. That means that the expense of providing administrative support to the 48 chapters has increased, while the income to support this additional work has remained the same.

When our organization first formed, volunteers administered it entirely. The Board hired an Executive Director (Donna VanBuecken) in 1996, when it was clear we had grown beyond what volunteers could handle. Since that time our "offices" were housed for free in Donna's dining room, basement, and garage - an arrangement that had to come to an end.

In 2008, we moved into the WILD Center facility. Although we are fortunate to own the entire WILD Center mortgage-free, for the first time ever, we have started paying costs related to office space - utilities, insurance, and for the past four years, real estate taxes. Most importantly, a promise to the membership has been kept: No dues funds have been expended on the development of the WILD Center site.

With increased administrative activities to support the chapters, and the continuing need to serve our members, over the course of these 10 years we have needed to increase our staff by two

part-time workers. One person could no longer handle the workload.

Besides expanding its oversight to more chapters, the home office has other responsibilities including publishing several educational brochures, films, and PowerPoints for use by members and chapters. It continues to administer the Seeds for Education grant program, administers the Wild Store, and has organized the Ecoscaper program for long-term members. Large amounts of time are devoted to *Journal* input and web site updates. Besides administering five new membership levels, and a national headquarters, it has attracted and handled the advertising for the organization, has initiated an e-newsletter to the membership, and has written requests for, and been awarded a number of grants. In 2008 and 2011, the WILD Center hosted annual meetings/conferences with a third coming up this year. Responding to communications from eight very active standing committees has also been time consuming, and we look forward to presenting to the membership a completely redesigned web site in July.

To date we have been funding the increase in operational activities with savings, grants, a line of credit, and appeals to the membership. You have been most generous. However, something substantial and reliable needs to be put in place.

Given the state of our nation's economy, this is, arguably, not the best time to be raising member dues. Yet we need to remain viable and continue to fulfill our mission. We are a leading voice in the increased awareness of what individuals can do to preserve a cleaner, more sustainable environment, but we can't continue to be so if we cannot count on a more stable income. Thus the increase in dues.

Thank you for continuing your support of Wild Ones. *

Writers & Artists

Tom Small is a founding member of the Kalamazoo (MI) Chapter.

David Poweleit is the new president of the Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter.

Rick Meader writes a newspaper column about landscaping with native plants. He is a member of the Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter.

David Warners is a professor at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His specialty is Ecology and Evolutionary Biology.

Barb Bray, a longtime active member of Oakland (MI) and North Oakland (MI) Chapters, is a contributing editor for the *Journal*.

Mark Charles, of the Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter, is the Wild Ones Seeds for Education grant coordinator.

Alice Tomboulian, who lives in southeast Michigan, has been a conservation and environmental activist since the 1960s.

Kevin Beuttell is a Landscape Architect in the Boston, Massachusetts, area.

Wisconsin Roots

Staying in touch with the land doesn't have to involve a shovel.

By David Poweleit

I grew up in Wisconsin, in the village of Menomonee Falls, which is just outside of Milwaukee. I was fortunate enough to live in a house with a big back yard that backed up to a sizable woods that someone from New York owned and left undeveloped (thankfully it is still undeveloped today – at least for the time being). The floor of the woods would be covered with white trillium in the spring time, and I am certain I would find many other treasures if I returned for a walk today, even though I am still a neophyte when it comes to plant identification.

It was my experiences with nature as I grew up that built my passion for wildlife and planting, which eventually led me to natives and restoration.

After graduating from college, I moved south of the border. This would be to Illinois, for all of you not familiar with the local state rivalry. After learning about Wild Ones, I figured I would visit the WILD Center at some point in time, so this was added to a bucket list of sorts. I still need to make it to the WILD Center, but I did recently make it up to the Madison area, and was able to check off several bucket-list items. Thus, the journey to reconnect not only with my Wisconsin roots but also with some of the original roots for ecology and native landscaping. Best of all, I was able to do the trip with my daughter and my parents; thus spanning the generations.

Aztalan State Park

The first stop was Aztalan State Park, which is easy to find in Aztalan, Wisconsin. The site has an interesting name and story behind it. This was the northern-most site of the Middle Mississippian Tradition over a millennium ago. Interesting how we talk about restoration to pre-settlement times, which only goes back not even two centuries ago, when archeological evidence clearly shows that man has been changing the land for a much longer period of time. The site obtained its name due to the erroneous connection to the Aztecs of Mexico. A visit offers the opportunity to walk along the Crawfish River and the historical site, time to enjoy the fresh air, and to ponder the mysteries of this advanced, ancient civilization.

Muir County Park

Our next stop was to the boyhood home of John Muir. Fountain Lake Farm, or Ennis Lake, is where John Muir's family lived after immigrating to the United States. This site is preserved as Muir County Park near Montello, Wisconsin. It features multiple plant communities and a trail around the lake. The one key disappointment was that, while there was a description of the location of the home on the lake, we could not find a marker showing the exact spot. The walking trail was nice, and provided great views of the flora and the lake. It is easy to understand why Muir was inspired to be the father of our national parks after spending his youth here. It is interesting to note that while Muir owned a beautiful homestead in California, and worked hard to preserve a lot of land, he was unable to secure the property of his boyhood home. Fortunately, it is now preserved and available for the public to enjoy.

Curtis Prairie

When you think of prairie restoration, do you know where it all began? Curtis Prairie at the University of Wisconsin Arboretum in Madison, Wisconsin, is the world's oldest restored prairie. Many techniques, including the use of fire in management, were implemented here. There is also a nice demonstration garden that shows species, and discusses plant communities of Wisconsin.

The Leopold Center

Thinking of land restoration and Wisconsin takes you to our next location, the Leopold Center. Aldo Leopold's land ethic concept and his book, *A Sand County Almanac*, speak directly to natural landscaping. It was terrific to see all the green concepts imple-

mented at the Leopold Center, and the incorporation of native landscaping on the site. Unfortunately, I was not able to take a tour and see the "shack." But I'll be happy to return again sometime down the road. It was still neat to be able to set foot on the stage of Leopold's writings. You may know that the book failed to be accepted for publication at first try – but did you know that the title of the book was changed from *Great Possessions*, and that there is not a Sand County in Wisconsin?

Pewit's Nest

Also, I had hoped to work in a visit to the National Crane Foundation in the Baraboo, Wisconsin, area. My visit, in spring, hit perfect weather, but it was a little early to make the stop. As luck would have it though, I had heard of another gem nearby – Pewit's Nest. The site is located just outside of Baraboo, and is a Wisconsin State Natural Area, which has now led to another bucket-list item of visiting more of these natural areas. The site reminded me of my youthful days and visits to Wisconsin Dells, but smaller, quieter, and more natural. And, in case you are wondering (like me) who Pewit was, peewit was the earlier name of a phoebe.

So, whether you are just passing through Wisconsin on the interstate, need a weekend getaway, or want to make it a vacation, I'd encourage you to take in the Wisconsin roots in the history of native landscaping. Wisconsin is blessed with the heritage of two of the three forefathers of modern ecology – Thoreau, Muir, and Leopold). I wasn't able to adjust the timing of my visit, but would advise anyone making a special trip to confirm operating times with the sites, and consider whether blooming

plants or fall colors should be part of the decision on timing, too.

Staying in Madison offers plenty of other attractions, especially if you are traveling with others who are not attuned to doing natives 24/7. Madison has a terrific little zoo if you are visiting with kids. There is also the circus museum in Baraboo – and Devil's Lake and Cave of the Mounds are not far away.

Who knows? Maybe you'll have a little more time on your trip to swing over and work in the WILD Center, too. *



Steps on the side of a platform mound at Aztalan State Park. Photo by James Steakley (Wikimedia Commons).

The Redbud: A colorful native tree for spring



Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) flowers add a much-needed spark of color to an early spring landscape.



A cluster of pink redbud flowers led to this cluster of brown seed pods, which will most probably result in a cluster of redbud seedlings somewhere else in our yard.

Story and photos by Rick Meader

When you think about popular, colorful ornamentals, eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) often comes to mind. It's a real crowd-pleaser, with a graceful, ornamental shape that puts out a "bouquet on a stem" look, with thousands of tiny pink or purple flowers lining its branches in early spring before its leaves emerge.

It's native to southern Michigan, south of the tension zone. It occurs naturally in an area extending from Maryland and the Carolinas, west to eastern Kansas through Texas, including all of the southern states and northern Florida. Of course, because it's a pretty little thing, the redbud and its cultivars have been planted in areas beyond its native range.

As a member of the Pea family (*Fabaceae*) it's a cousin to the pod producers like Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) and Kentucky coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*).

Let's learn more about this colorful little native

If you want to use the redbud in your landscape, it is fairly flexible in terms of where it will grow. It naturally occurs in rich soil along stream and riverbanks, but is tolerant of a wider range of conditions. It likes sun or partial shade, and can do well in most soils except water-logged soils and dry, sandy soils.

If you want to plant this tree in your yard in a northern state, make sure it comes from a northern native-plant nursery, because trees from nurseries in southern states are often killed off by cold winters.

In terms of the tree itself, it may reach a height of 15 to 25 feet, with a spread about the same. It achieves its characteristic vase shape fairly early in life, and is often multi-stemmed.

The Michigan State Champion (big tree of the species) is about 26 feet tall and 35 feet wide. The redbud's leaves are heart-shaped and almost round – reaching a diameter of about 3 to 4 inches – and emerge *after* the flowers are pretty well gone. In the fall they turn a nice shade of yellow, but once they change color, they don't stay on the tree very long.

The flowers (and buds) give the tree its primary common name. Each little pea-like flower is about 3/4 of an inch, but the sheer number of pink blossoms along its branches makes this one of the showier native trees we have. You have to be patient, though, as a tree has to be about seven years old to make much of a spring showing.

They bloom in late April to early May. The flowers seem to be mainly on younger stems, so as a tree gets older you don't see as many along the main stems, but the stem bark takes on a nice cinnamon brown, scaly texture that is attractive in its own right.

Each flower makes a flat, brown seed pod about 3 to 4 inches in length that may hold four to 10 seeds (which are quite good at self-seeding and growing new trees around the parent). The tree's pod is similar to that of the non-native (to Michigan) black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), but the redbud's pod is pointier at the ends.

Eastern redbud does have another, less common name, Judas tree. Legend has it that Judas Iscariot hung himself from a redbud tree, but it was a different species (*Cercis siliquastrum*), as our redbud does not grow in the area where Judas lived.

Another fun fact about this tree is that it had a number of uses for Native Americans, ranging from an infusion of the bark for congestion, fever, and vomiting – to use of the wood for handles and bows – to many uses of parts of the tree for basket-making. Some would also roast the pods, and eat the seeds, finding them tasty.

Eastern redbud has two places in our little yard, and if I had more room, I'd add more.

I enjoy its flowers, shape, and shade – birds enjoy its seeds – and bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds go for its nectar. It can make an outstanding addition to your yard, too. *

A Slow Walk With a Red Glove

By Barb Bray

As I walked out the door with my group of 15 excited first graders one cool November morning, I reached into my pocket for my gloves. To my dismay, I only found one plum-colored glove in my coat pocket.

Now that we had identified the animal homes, we were ready to head down the gravel trail into the woods. We stopped near a large red maple that had shed millions of pretty red and orange leaves all over the

My red glove turned into an eye-catching teaching tool. "Do you see anything red around here?" Immediately they stopped thinking about running down the trail, and noticed all the beautiful red leaves at their feet. They picked up the leaves, and admired the different colors each leaf displayed. I pointed out how my red glove with five fingers was just like the shape of the leaves. They counted the lobes on their leaves to see for themselves.

Soon I heard another voice. This one didn't say, "Let's go faster." Instead, a girl pointed out a cluster of red berries lying off the trail to one side. We then talked about how red berries are an advertisement for birds and other animals to come and eat. The children figured out that the berries would be in the animal's stomach as it flies or walks away. They learned from me what happens after that.

The children learned the advantages of a slow walk. At one point, I walked a little bit faster, and it was the children who drew me back to something I had missed. A small red ladybug was sitting on the delicate yellow flowers of a goldenrod. As I looked at the ladybug, I asked the kids what they thought ladybugs eat. They guessed flowers, bugs, and a couple of other things. So we looked more closely.

What else might be on the goldenrod? One boy spotted a spider web hanging from a leaf. Suddenly I noticed movement – all along the stem were tiny green writhing aphids. That's why the ladybug was sitting there. But that wasn't all. We spotted a couple of ants crawling up the stem near the aphids, *and* a green caterpillar on a leaf.

All of these were on the goldenrod stem we were looking at. The rest of the walk turned up red honeysuckle berries, box elder bugs with red on them, reddish plastic markers on dead trees, and bubblegum fungus on a log.

When I got home that afternoon, I found my lost glove on the floor in my living room. I was happy that I found it, but I still kept my bright red glove. Do you have mismatched gloves? If not, your local Dollar Store is a great place to create your own pair. *



Erin the Photographer. Photo by Bonnie Vastag.

I slipped it on to my right hand, thinking that after an hour outside my left hand was going to feel as cold as a pack of frozen vegetables.

My face must have conveyed my feeling of loss, because our new naturalist, who was shadowing my group, reached over and handed me a glove from her pocket – a bright red glove. I thankfully pulled the glove on to my left hand, and held it out proudly. The children laughed and wanted to know if I really was going to wear my mismatched gloves. I told them, "Of course I'm going to wear these gloves – and I have an idea."

We walked across the leaf-covered parking lot, and stopped in front of two tall cottonwood trees. Since most of the leaves had fallen, the sturdy branches stood naked against the cloudy sky. On one of the large branches, we could see a ball of leaves and twigs held tightly between some smaller branches. Many of the kids thought that this bunch of leaves was a bird nest, and they were surprised to learn that it was actually a drey, or "squirrel nest." At least three other squirrel leaf homes were in nearby trees.

ground. That is when I heard "the voice." A boy in the group wanted to know why we had to keep stopping to look at things. He wanted to "go faster and not stop anywhere." It's something I have seen before – too many kids are in a hurry, and don't know how to slow down.

I told the boy (and all the other children as well) that we were on a slow walk, not a fast one – so we could see our surroundings. Then my red glove came into play. I held both hands high in the air above my head and asked the children which glove was easier to see. Almost everyone yelled out, "The red glove!"



The red glove with five fingers was just like the shape of the leaves. The children counted the lobes on their leaves to see for themselves.

Grapevine

Communication and easy-to-understand explanations are more and more important for Wild Ones

By Maryann Whitman

Communication

The young boy had spent all his life in the city: He was enthralled by the woods. We battled endless brambles, thickets plucked at our clothes, and branches whipped our faces. Finally, we reached a clearing. Having survived the trek into the wilderness, we began exploring. We poked at raccoon scat on a log. We found some partridgeberry, and chewed on its pleasantly flavored leaves. We explored a trail left by a small animal, that led to a barely noticeable opening at the base of an oak tree. We peered at a squirrel's feeding station on a mossy, long-ago sawn stump.

The boy's eyes, big with excitement at what he was discovering, shifted to me, and he asked solemnly, "Do you think anyone else has ever been in this place before?"

With lightning clarity I remembered being eight-or-so, in my cedar swamp, thinking exactly that same question. I moved away from the long-ago sawn stump, so I could answer without disturbing his wonderment, "On this very spot where I'm standing right now – I don't think so," I said.

Shifting baselines

The boy was experiencing something new. It was quite possible that this memory would be iconic for him, as mine had been for me. This represented undisturbed Nature; this was Wilderness to him. This vision might always define for him what Nature was like in his youth.

He and I were standing in a small clearing, within a hundred feet of my barn, and perhaps 1,000 feet of Twin Lakes Golf Course, but this proximity didn't matter to him. Just as it hadn't mattered to me so long ago – knowing that I was likely within an hour's walking distance from home. That was my vision of Wilderness.

Without a doubt, John Muir's vision of Nature was somewhat different from the boy's and from my own.

This phenomenon of differing reference points across generational periods is what some popular science writers are calling "shifting baselines." Marine biologist Daniel Pauly coined this phrase in 1995, to describe a phenomenon of "lowered expectations, in which each generation regards a progressively poorer natural world as normal."

One might quibble with the meaning of this phrase. A statistical baseline is a measurement that is static and relates to subsequent measures; but our idea of "Nature" is dynamic and ever changing. On the other hand, how else would we describe the very gradual, creeping changes that we notice now and then in our surroundings, the fewer birds and quieter frogs? Each realization, though not statistically measured for purposes of comparison, sets a milestone in our memory – a baseline against which to compare the next time we stop to think about it.

How this is relevant to Wild Ones

We have the generational differences in experience, compounded with gradual changes in personal experiences and awarenesses, standing in the way of communication. Our point of reference, when we try to explain our approach to landscaping our yards, our reasons for doing what we do, prevents us from being understood by those who organize their related concepts differently.



Where I see an ant foraging for breadcrumbs on my kitchen counter, another person sees a reason to go out and buy bug spray. Where I see the very existence of that ant as evidence that there is a healthy environment for that ant's colony to prosper and survive –

We should not portray our positions and opinions as being "moral" and "more educated" while other positions and opinions are somehow "immoral" or "ignorant."

an advantageous environment for humans as well – another person sees their home, as the ad on television affirms, as a fortress under attack by outside creepy crawlies.

We are competing with both points of reference acquired through memories and experiences (different from our own) and points of reference reinforced by the multi-million dollar promotion of bug killers and weed killers.

How can we communicate better?

We cannot effectively communicate by reference to our position as being "moral" and all other positions being, in comparison, "immoral." We cannot communicate by suggesting that our position is the more "educated" position, and all others are, in contrast, "ignorant." We must even be careful when we color our message with politically charged language such as "global warming" and "climate change," however relevant these may be to the overall picture.

Perhaps we need to change our approach and our language, try to express our ideas in more concrete examples.

Consider this explanation: "I chose 'those plants' because they have very deep roots that break up compacted soil." "I hate washing my car and seeing all that water flow through the grass into the gutter. I figure I'm keeping the water I'm paying for, on my own land."

Or this one: "Why do I have a rain barrel? I see all that rain from my roof as free water. I'm just taking advantage of it. I use it to water my flower beds."

Nowhere have "native plants" been mentioned – only the description of their actual usefulness.

We could go on. "I have a vegetable garden, and I read that these plants attract all sorts of bees for my vegetables. My garden has been doing pretty well."

"I love having birds/butterflies around. These plants apparently are very attractive to them."

Concrete examples with no hard-to-explain ideas

And, if the listeners express no interest – let them go. If they do, be gentle; like taking a young child and providing one more step.

Jean Piaget, a biologist who developed one of the most influential theories of the development of the human mind argued that we cannot "assimilate" new information without the parallel process of "accommodation." A new framework for information needs to be acquired gradually. It's like blowing up a balloon, the first time the balloon has difficulty accommodating too much air, the next time it inflates a little more easily, until it can assimilate a great deal more with less need for accommodation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

No Existence, Only Coexistence

Gardening for the good of biodiversity

By David P. Warners, Ph.D



The loon. Photo: Tim Bowman, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The loons came back. I was teaching a botany class at Au Sable Institute, in northern Michigan, and I had just returned to my small lakeside cabin after an extended field trip in the Upper Peninsula. When I left two days earlier, the Memorial Day weekend was winding down. The loons I had been hearing and watching each evening for two weeks had disappeared. In their place were water-skiers, pontoon boats, jet skis, and lots of noise and activity. I neither saw nor heard the loons during the entire weekend. But now, having returned to a still, dusk-adorned lake, I was grateful to see the pair of loons fishing again on the quiet water.

This scenario caused me to wonder if there are better ways we *Homo sapiens* can fit ourselves into nature – ways that are more affirming of the non-human creatures with whom we share our places. I think this is an especially important question to ask of ourselves with regard to that part of nature we have the most control over – our own yards. Do we have to manage our yards in ways that exclusively appeal to our own whims and proclivities, or can we care for these small portions of the landscape in ways that benefit a broader community of creatures?

Before human beings showed up here in North America, this continent had a rich history during which a network of mutually beneficial and mutually sustaining interactions was forged. Nature is a tapestry of knit-together, intertwined, and interdependent relationships. Species need species. Indeed, in nature there is no existence, only coexistence.

But when we plant our yards with nonnative species (lawn grasses, ornamental shrubs, non-native trees), we simplify nature, reducing it down to so much less than it could be. Native biodiversity needs native plants as a foundational framework.

Our native insects and birds typically gain no benefit from the presence of non-native plants. Furthermore, nature's resiliency will resist our efforts for a simplified, unnatural landscape. Nature keeps trying to be *natural*, it keeps trying to mix up uniformity and increase complexity. So we fight against these natural tendencies, often using chemicals, loud fossil fuel-burning machines, irrigation, lots of time, and significant outlays of money.

But this isn't the way things have to be. We could work more in concert with nature, using native plants in our yards, either in formal landscape beds or as patches of natural habitat. Either way, this kind of landscaping invites rather than repels other forms of native biodiversity. Even in the most urban and industrialized areas, gardening with native plants induces butterflies to appear, almost as if by magic; grasshoppers, too (how do they get to these places?) – and birds in abundance. Because nature is knit together by so many coexisting interactions, to borrow a phrase from the movie, "Field of Dreams," if you plant it (a native garden) they will come (the native creatures).

To summarize, when native plants are incorporated into our yards, numerous benefits are realized:

Native plants attract native pollinators.

Butterflies and hummingbirds depend on native wildflowers for food. Butterflies also require native host species upon which they lay eggs. Many pollinators are highly specific for which species of nectar or host plant they require.

Native plants attract native-seed eaters.

Many homeowners maintain bird feeders, yet our native birds are best served when native seeds are available. Planting native plants in our yards is like planting bird feeders. Even for birds that don't typically eat seeds, the native plants will support insects that provide food for birds.

Native plants mean less yard work.

Native plants "knew" how to thrive in their places long before human beings arrived. When you find species that are adapted to the conditions of your yard, they will need no fertilizer, herbicide, pesticide, or irrigation. And when leaves fall, most native species benefit from the layer of insulation and the fertilizer they provide (native plants prefer that we "leave the leaves").

Gardens with native plants offer genetic diversity for wild populations.

As natural vegetation declines, the genetic diversity of each species declines as well.

Plants, just like animals, can suffer from inbreeding problems. Native species in our landscapes (particularly if they are local genotypes) can benefit natural populations of these plants by offering new sources of genetic diversity when pollinators move between them.

Gardens with native plants help connect us to the places where we live. The natural landscapes of North America held

Nature keeps trying to be natural.

stunning beauty and integrity. Urbanization has essentially pushed back that beautiful tapestry, and laid down a much simpler, less healthy, and less interesting replacement. When native biodiversity surrounds our homes, we gain back a sense of that original beauty, and affirm the natural history of the places in which we now reside.

Landscapes with native plants are good for us.

Several interesting studies in the newly emerging field of Ecopsychology are showing that natural areas encountered on a daily basis contribute to the health and well being of people. Frequent encounters with nature help us heal quicker, keep our spirits up, enhance our attention span, and promote more hopefulness and joy. By contrast, some communities have banned or limited lawn chemicals that are staples of conventional urban landscaping because of their potential adverse human-health effects.

Caring for your yard in ways that affirm the native biodiversity of your region need not start with heroic endeavors. You can and should start small, build upon humble successes, and find motivation in positive changes that slowly accrue over time. Encouragement and advice is available through extension services or native plant nurseries in your area. Additionally, Wild Ones is a national organization with many local chapters of people dedicated to using native species in home landscaping. If you have a friend or neighbor who has used native plants, they will be a great resource for local knowledge (and possibly seed or rootstock too). The benefits of shifting away from a non-native landscape to a more natural, earth-friendly yard will amaze you, as will the deep satisfaction you'll feel when the native creatures of your area, like the loons, return again. *

This article appeared in the National Garden Clubs Bulletin, *The National Gardener*, Winter, 2012 issue. Reprinted with permission of the author.

Project Buddy

Help support children and youth learning about native plants.

By Mark Charles

Since its beginning, Wild Ones members and chapters have assisted projects that engage children and youth in creating and maintaining native-plant communities. Wild Ones members support educational projects across the United States. Schools, nature centers, and youth programs, such as scouts and 4-H create butterfly gardens, outdoor classrooms, prairies, woodlands, wetland habitats, and similar projects. These projects establish plant communities that are native to their local ecosystem. In 15 years, Wild Ones has supported hundreds of projects from coast to coast.

For some time, we've been looking at the diverse ways that Wild Ones members support such projects, with a goal of multiplying the approaches that are most effective. We've found that, while each project is a unique situation, most can benefit from someone who periodically checks in with the adult project leader, and offers encouragement and assistance.

Adult project leaders may be school teachers, naturalists, parent volunteers, or leaders of groups such as scouts or 4-H. Projects have many dimensions – all deal with selecting plant species, site prep, and garden maintenance. All need to communicate with parents, the landowner, and other stakeholders. All must engage children in planning and working on the project. Regardless of circumstances, all project leaders appreciate an occasional word of encouragement and a "listening ear."

The new "Project Buddy" role is a way for Wild Ones members to take on this role in a systematic way. A member commits about four hours a month to help a single project and its leader. Since many projects are in areas where there are not yet Wild Ones chapters, most of the interaction is by e-mail or telephone.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact me at execdirector@for-wild.org, or the national office for a copy of the Volunteer Job Description. *

Probably the most visible example of unintended consequences, is what happens every time humans try to change the natural ecology of a place. – Margaret J. Wheatley

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 visits to the Wild Ones Institute of Learning and Development (WILD Center) and special items through 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. If you are considering such a gift, you should consult with your attorney or accountant for how the gift will affect your estate plan.

Volunteer

More than 4,800 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 2011 Photo Contest

By Chan Mahanta

POLLINATORS

First Place and People's Choice Award

Deb Berndt

Swallowtail on Swamp Milkweed

Second Place

Sue Barrie

Black-Winged Damselfly on Pagoda

Dogwood Berries

Third Place

Betty Hall

Zebra Swallowtail Butterfly on Cardinal Vine

FLORA

First Place

Mike Matthews

Southern Trillium Showing Her Beauty

Second Place

Jan Hunter

Prairie Smoke

Third Place

Karen Schulz

Blanket of Bloodroot

SCENERY

First Place

Deb Berndt

Winter on the Prairie

Second Place

Ruth Oldenburg

Eclectic Mix

Third Place

Mike Weis

Catalpas in Snowpocalypse

RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPING

First Place

Betty Hall

Scarlet Bee Balm and Purple Coneflower

Second Place

Deb Berndt

Summer Crescendo

Third Place

Susan Templeman

Friends Flower Garden

CHILD

First Place

David Poweleit

Sometimes You Have to Stop and Smell the Spiderwort

Second Place

Mike Weis

Inspecting Wild Geranium Petals and Hickory Nuts

KIDS PHOTOS

First Place

Danielle Bradley

Flora 2

Second Place

Danielle Bradley

Residential Landscape 1

A slideshow of the winners can be found at www.wildones.org/members/photo/.



Michigan Lily. Photo by Deb Berndt.



Sometimes You Have to Stop and Smell the Spiderwort. Photo by David Poweleit.



Residential Landscape. Photo by Danielle Bradley.



Swallowtail on Cone Flower. Photo by Judy Hines.



Southern Blue Flag Iris. Photo by Betty Hall.



The Path to Serenity. Photo by Donna VanBuecken.

When will Nature finally receive her due?

Is it possible that “commercial and development people” are changing course, and beginning to realize their responsibility to Nature and the Earth? The answer seems to be yes.

By Alice Tombouliau

There’s a welcome wave of thought washing through the world’s business community these days, and it’s an idea that we who call ourselves “conservationists” may well applaud. Can it be that “commercial and development” people, a group whose actions have often doomed Mother Nature, are now advising each other to care about natural processes and resources in their business designs? Are we moving closer to a global ethic among re-oriented capitalists?

It’s not really a new idea, this concept that in the course of designing a business project – for instance, producing cotton clothing – the value of the natural resources to be used up and the natural processes to be overturned ought to be explicitly included in calculating the costs versus benefits of the undertaking. For over 60 years conservationists and scientists have put forward such thinking. In 1948 an early and clear statement came from Aldo Leopold in the book, *A Sand County Almanac*, where he presented his Land Ethic philosophy using these words: “We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”

Over the following decades, environmental scientists enunciated the concept of “ecosystem services,” referring to the multitude of contributions to human well being that are supplied by the natural world. Such services range from “providing clean water and air” and “decomposing plant and animal wastes” to “offering recreation and inspiration.” From this viewpoint it’s easy to conceive of assigning monetary values to specific ecosystem services, just as we assign dollar values to educational or health services in human communities. The next step would be to inform business decision makers of their dependence on ecosystem services, and the potential results of damaging these services, and allow their own enlightened self-interest to lead them to protect these important services while still maintaining positive balance sheets.

Although well-stated and supported with scientific studies, these concepts from the scientific and conservation community made slow headway within the global business world. Conservationists were understandably thrilled by the emergence of a

charismatic communicator with a business background: Paul Hawken, whose revolutionary but practical outline for changing business from a negative to a positive force for ecosystem stability was published in 1993 in his third book, *The Ecology of Commerce*. In a 1995 talk in East Lansing, Michigan, Hawken asked, “How do we do so little with so much? Why does our system say that it’s cheaper to destroy the earth than to take care of it?” He concluded by observing that, “We are *inside* the period of change right now, so it’s hard to see it. Like the worldwide changes toward democracy, it couldn’t have been predicted.”

From an ecologist’s viewpoint, Hawken’s awakening of the business community with a much-needed infusion of urgency also could not have been predicted.

In the two decades since *The Ecology of Commerce* was published, the concept of an ecology-based economic system has been further refined by business practitioners. New terminology has been introduced using words and concepts familiar to business people, to serve as metaphors or analogies for ecological or social concepts. “Natural capital” is a metaphor for the limited stocks of physical and biological resources found on Earth. “Willingness to pay” is an estimate of the amount people are prepared to pay for a certain condition for which there is normally no market price (e.g., willingness to pay for protection of an endangered species).*

The business-based jargon appears in a 2011 interview with the president and CEO of The Nature Conservancy, Mark Tercek, who left an investment-banking career with Goldman Sachs to assume the national Conservancy leadership. In describing innovative ways to get conservation work done, he says, “In many projects, The Nature Conservancy acts like an investment banker. But nature is our client.” (This metaphor can be translated as, “The Nature Conservancy assembles the money required to buy the long-term protection that nature needs.”) Later, Tercek tells the interviewer, “To borrow a term from my banking days, we need to maximize our conservation return on investment. That will require a relentless focus on priorities and measuring the effectiveness of our work.”



Indian banker Pavan Sukhdev is a current leader and advocate for incorporating the values of nature into decision making at all levels: International bodies, national governments, local and regional authorities, business, non-profit organizations, and the scientific community. He was Study Leader of the international team for "The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)" study, hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme.

In a January, 2012, interview with *Yale Environment 360*, Pavan Sukhdev says the challenge, as he sees it, is how to address the "economic invisibility of nature," which allows the

*How do we do so little with so much?
Why does our system say it's cheaper to
destroy the earth than to take care of it?
—Paul Hawken*

economic value of ecosystems to be ignored by governments and businesses. He cites crucial benefits from nature that are often overlooked, including the capacity of wetlands for filtering water, the role of forests in preventing erosion and flooding, and the importance of bees in pollinating crops. The people who worked on the TEEB project, Sukhdev reports, all agree that there's a huge risk in blind monetization. "When we talk about valuation, we see it as a human institution. There are societies that value pristine nature because it's a connection. It's a spiritual connection."

We've come full circle back to Aldo Leopold, who left us this eloquent plea: "Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

In answer to the question raised in this article's heading, conservationists and scientists have identified for present-day business entrepreneurs and developers a pathway they must follow toward "giving Nature her due." They bear an enormous responsibility for choosing to reverse their past record, and to rehabilitate humanity's home planet. We as a society must insist that they make this choice and follow this path, and we must honor those who do so. *

*Definitions are from the report (2010) from "The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)" study, hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme.



Rethinking Urban Rain Gardens

By Kevin Beuttell

Stormwater infiltration gardens, also known as bio-retention gardens or rain gardens, are a key feature of comprehensive sustainable storm-water management strategies. Despite their proven environmental benefits, however, many people are reluctant to use rain gardens because they are typically unattractive, with sparse and unhealthy vegetation. But by rethinking bioretention gardens as primarily dry environments that experience only brief wet periods (rather than the other way around), the relationships between vegetation, soil, and environmental performance are dramatically improved. This shift in the design approach to rain gardens opens up new possibilities for incorporating ornamental, attractive, and easily maintained storm-water management systems in all types of locations and climates.

One of the fundamental problems of the conventional rain garden design approach is that the water-loving plant species many designers call for are not appropriate in areas that commonly experience long dry periods between rain storms – which is the case in many areas of the country during the summer months. These extended dry periods effectively limit water at a time when the plants need it the most. The moisture-loving plants then become stressed and, at best, enter dormancy until the rains come again – or, at worst, simply die. As a result, people see these landscapes as cluttered, unkempt, and unmanaged.

Urban hydrology is typically dominated by erratic and flashy surface-water flows, and this condition is only tolerated by a few weedy plant species. A dry rain garden regime with temporary wet periods during and shortly after storms is significantly more hydrologically stable from a plant perspective, than a wet rain garden regime that regularly experiences long dry periods between rain storms. By planting rain gardens with attractive drought-tolerant deep-rooted meadow species that thrive in dry summers, and easily manage brief rainy periods, rain gardens can be lush, and look like ornamental gardens, all without compromising their storm-water management functions.

A skilled designer with detailed knowledge of plants and their tolerance to common pollutants and water inundation opens up new possibilities for attractive storm-water management systems in a variety of scales, site locations, and regional climates. These gardens can be designed to not only mitigate negative ecological impacts, but also to create community assets that respect people's deep connection with landscape, and provide opportunities to improve mental and physical well being. *

Chapter of Wild Ones. That led to our generating yet more educational materials for the new members of our chapter. Eventually, a book became inevitable – a book that would be, in its generation, a continuing process of both learning and teaching.

Over and over again, during our life together, Nancy said to me, “We’re so lucky, we’re so lucky.” She felt fortunate and grateful that we had finally found each other and a second life together in a “leading,” a mission, that we shared in so many ways and that she believed in so passionately.

We have indeed been lucky. We’re blessed to have found Sara Stein’s wonderful book, which inspired us to undertake the work of Noah, saving the species of the Earth – one small “ark,” one suburban yard at a time. Not by ourselves, to be sure. We’re blessed to have found so many wonderful friends and associates, so various a community of “wild ones,” to work with us in the struggle for a peaceful life, for simplicity and dedication, for restoration, and for non-violence toward the whole Community of Life.

Nancy yearned to see the beauty and share the pleasures of the Earth, and she desired to help others to see – really to look, to see what’s really there – how beautifully complex and simple, and how wonderful are all the plants and creatures of the Earth. How we must all do whatever we can to save them. She wanted, always, to teach.

As teachers, together, of Shakespeare, and then as teachers of what Aldo Leopold calls a “land ethic,” Nancy and I learned from each other. Only in her death do I begin to realize how much I learned from her, and how much I had yet to learn. We do, however, continue to learn from those we love and lose. The book is just such a continuation.

During the final year of Nancy’s struggle with cancer – as she realized how little time she had and I was more or less in denial – she over and over again made me promise to “finish the book.” I have fulfilled my promise, as best I could. It is, nonetheless, Nancy’s book, not mine. It was her spirit that motivated our work together; it is her generosity in sharing with everyone her reading and observation that generated most of the material in the first three parts

of the book – and it is her spirit that has remained with me in this effort to communicate her love and her dedication.

During those final months, she worked as hard and as long as she was able to. She did not arrive at a final text, but she had a clear vision – and a rough draft version – of the entire book.

The intended audience includes all those who want to learn more about what they can do—and why they should do it—to help preserve the wondrous diversity of species that have shared with us human beings the immense and perilous journey of evolution.

The Book

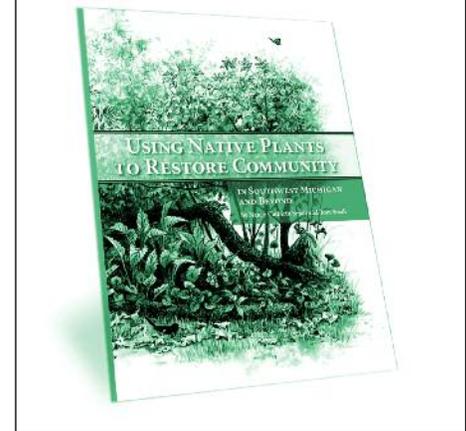
The Introduction stresses how every yard can make a difference.

Part I: We provide a series of “Perspectives” on the rationale for natural landscaping and the basis for how to proceed: Not only what to do, but also what not to do – both our principles and our mistakes.

Part II: “Particulars,” provides plant lists and advice for many different environmental conditions and human intentions. Here, we give particular attention to plant communities that will provide habitat and nurture for the many kinds of pollinators so essential to plant reproduction and yet so stressed and depleted by loss of habitat, by industrial agriculture, and by conventional landscaping. Here we also give

GET THE BOOK

You can buy a copy of Nancy and Tom’s book at the Wild Ones Store, or through our Wild Ones Associate Bookstore. Either way, this book is sure to make a great addition to your library.



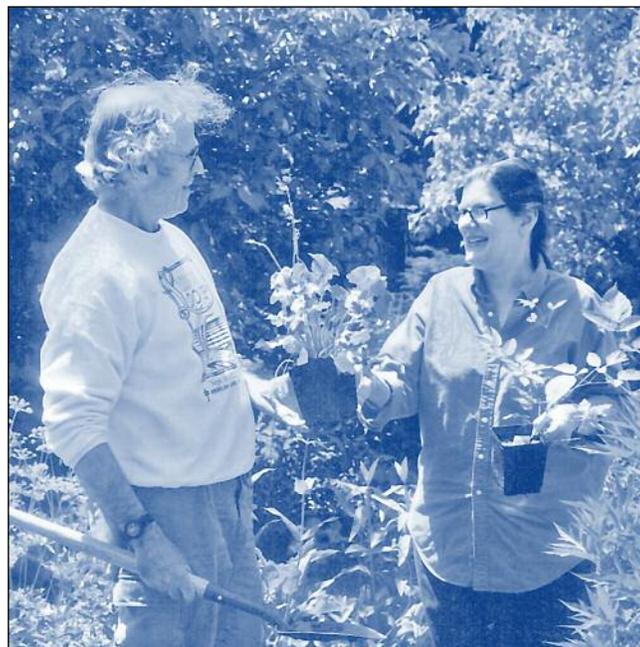
special attention to trees and shrubs, absolutely essential to fully supportive habitat for wildlife but ordinarily given only casual, ornamental attention in conventional landscaping and gardening.

Doug Tallamy’s *Bringing Nature Home* has been a particular inspiration in these first two parts of the book, along with his program here in Kalamazoo in 2008 for a Wild Ones conference that Nancy organized at the Kalamazoo Nature Center.

Part III: In “Rewards and Joys,” Nancy gathered together many of her close observations of plants and wild creatures. She believed that the whole of the living world participates in the joy of being – and as we observe and cherish the lives of plants and of creatures other than ourselves, we participate in the fullness of their being – and their joy.

Part IV: “Restoring Community,” explores more fully the underlying philosophy of the entire book. Here, we collect many of the essays that we wrote, singly or together, during the 15 years of our marriage and our mission. I’ve rewritten most of the essays to bring them up to date, or perhaps, more accurately, simply to continue and extend the conversations, between the two of us and with our community, that brought these essays into being.

In these past two years since Nancy’s death, I’ve gathered together a wonderful community



Tom and Nancy Small were co-authors of *Using Native Plants to Restore Community*. Nancy died from cancer in late 2009, prior to the publication of the book. Tom finished it.

of friends, scientists, designers, artists, and scientific illustrators – almost all of them local – who’ve helped me to create the most beautiful book I could, in keeping with Nancy’s vision of community and of beauty. Altogether, the large-format book is 270 pages, with over 170 original illustrations, from imaginative to visionary to scientifically precise – drawings, woodcuts, etchings, and a watercolor painting for the cover. Restoring community is, above all, an *art*.

The Ending: The book ends where it all began, with a call to participate in the work of Noah, growing arks to save whatever we can of wondrous, astonishing creatures and the green plants – the divine gift of *everything*.

The final essay, “What Does a Latter-Day Noah Need to Know?” begins with a review of the bad news, in an effort to clear the mind of false hope. Then comes the question: “Once we know the worst, what then?” I summarize a few of what I see as both visionary and practical responses to the crisis.

I end the book with one final urgent plea: “Love the place where you are, right now; it’s what the whole of your life and 14 billion years of cosmic evolution have delivered you to. Invest *yourself* in it, *because* of the risk, and because you love it. Save native biodiversity at home. Recruit your neighbors as fellow weavers of the web. Grow an ark as many cubits long and wide, and with as many beds for native plants, as you can manage. Trust the vast intelligence of the Earth-system: Something of what we save will come through. It always has. It always will. It’s the best we can hope for – all we can do. And we *can* do it. Together, we are *learning how*.”

That’s what the book is about: Restoring harmony and community, wherever you are; knowing, clearly, what we are called to do; and learning, together, how to do it – as Wild Ones and as members of a sacred Earth community. *

I predict native plant gardening and restoration will continue and expand as our access to nature decreases. One reason for this growth in use of native plants reflects our cultural urge to restore and recapture what is lost.

– Linda McMahan, horticultural historian

Grapevine CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

We can come up with a variety of concrete explanations for our preferences: I don’t have to replace the plants every year; I don’t have to spend money on fertilizers and pesticides; I don’t have to worry about my kids/dogs playing in the flower beds, the plants recover.

Crucial Confrontations

Shortly after I wrote this, I received the *Natural Area Preservation News* from Ann Arbor, Michigan. Dave Borneman, the Natural Area Preservation Manager, in his “Coordinator’s Corner,” had written something that, with his permission, I reprint here.

Dave wrote, “I had the opportunity recently to attend an excellent training called ‘Crucial Confrontations: Tools for resolving Broken Promises, Violated Expectations, and Bad Behavior.’ I went into it looking for ways to better deal with the problems that other people bring into my life, ... to my surprise I came away with an eye opening awareness of just how much I contribute to – no, *co-create* – those problems. It was easier when I could tell myself that others were the source of those problems, not I.

“But, if I can honestly confront the fact that I am part of the problem, that can be a source of hope. That’s because, as hard as it is to change my behavior, it is still far, far easier than trying to change someone else’s behavior! So maybe there really *is* a chance that those problems can be solved. Of course, the solution then takes on a very different look: start by changing myself and *then* worry about persuading others to change themselves.”

It occurred to me that his message applied to what I had just written. By changing our language when we speak to someone who has made landscaping choices that are different from ours, we are in effect, changing our behavior. We’re also changing the message the other person hears. By speaking in abstract, undefined terms we may take on a superior air, which, though unintentional, can be distinctly off-putting to the person we’re trying to win over. When we make our goals concrete and clearly understandable, our likelihood of communicating increases dramatically. We also avoid using catchphrases that may have existing associations – associations that automatically raise walls, preventing communication.

Here’s an example of a misfire in communication, on my part. Standing by the fence separating my land from hers (both sizable acreages), having a friendly chat, I spot a largish autumn olive, its trunk about a foot onto my land and immediately say, “That’s got to go.” My neighbor tells me, “It’s such a pretty tree in the spring; I’ve admired it from my kitchen window since we moved here.” I say something like, “It’s an ‘invasive plant’ that isn’t any use to our ‘wildlife.’” She counters with, “Oh my, does everything have to be useful?” A dozen answers come to mind, but all I do is grin and say “I’ll have to think about that one.”

What do you think I should have said, or what should I do now?

My e-mail: editor@wildones.org or send a note to the WILD Center, it will reach me. *



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: Windows laptop computer (less than four years old)
 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.



Time to Get Outside and Read a Good Book

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

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

It's just trees, isn't it?

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– E. O. Wilson, 2000



A Cautionary Tale About Milkweed

Betty Hall of Lexington, Kentucky, is a native-plant gardener who recently had a scary experience after cutting tropical milkweed for some monarch caterpillars. She apparently got some of the sap in her eyes, and by the next morning, she had serious vision problems.

Beware of the sap

Milkweed sap can cause chemical burns on the cornea that can take from a few days to a couple of weeks to clear up. Many folks know milkweed sap tastes bad to birds and animals, but have never heard of the severe effects if it gets in the eyes. Apparently all milkweeds (including our native varieties) can cause problems but tropical milkweed (*Asclepias curassavica*) is especially problematic. Betty received medical attention, and after about a week, her sight was back to normal.

Monarchs need milkweed

She knows monarchs must have milkweed to survive, and plans to continue growing them. She also plans to be more careful when handling them in the future.

Betty is a nature photographer who writes a blog on gardening with native plants, butterfly gardening, and other happenings in her Kentucky backyard: www.bettyhallphotography.com/blog. *

Here are a couple of web sites with people discussing similar experiences:

monarchwatch.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=5&t=1676&p=7794&hilit=milkweed+eyes#p7794.

faq.gardenweb.com/faq/lists/butterfly/2006125222027069.html.

Wild Ones has new national directors on its board

Wild Ones is pleased to announce new national directors.

Jan Hunter

Owner Naturally Native Nursery
Oak Openings (OH) Chapter
2014

Janis Solomon

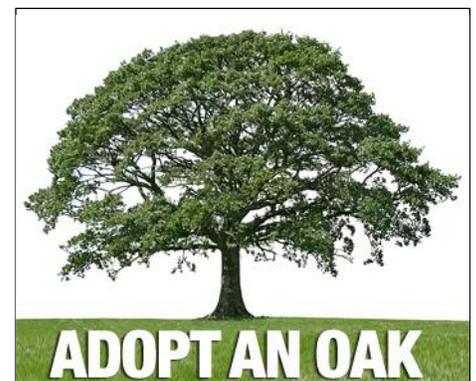
Professor Emeritus Connecticut College
Mountain Laurel (CT) Chapter
2014

Rick Webb

Landscaper
PAL from Pennsylvania
2012

Please join us in welcoming Jan, Janis, and Rick to the business end of Wild Ones. The other members of the national board are looking forward to working with them on the important issues related to issues facing Wild Ones as we go about fulfilling the goals of our mission.

Reminder: National Board elections will be taking place again this summer. If you are interested in serving on the national board, please contact execdirector@wildones.org for further information about board responsibilities and commitments. *



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:
P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, Wisconsin 54912.
To see the oak savanna design go to wildones.org/eco/center/wolandscapes/currentlandscapeplans.html.

FOREVER WILD

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Pat Clancy
Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter

John DeLisle & Theresa DeWalls
Southeast Michigan (MI) Chapter

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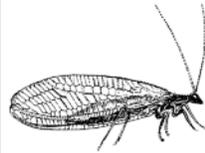
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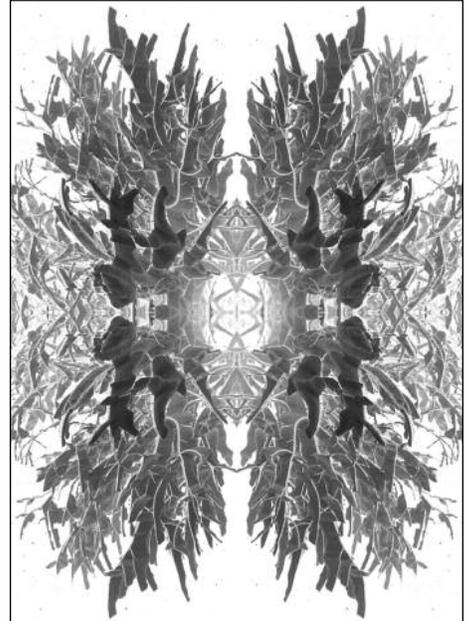
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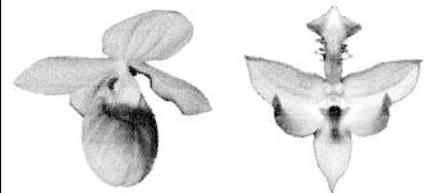
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Carolyn Larkin 414-881-4017
plantlarkin@gmail.com

Milwaukee North Chapter #18
Message Center: 414-299-9888 x1

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

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native.plant.calvert@gmail.com

Wolf River Chapter #74
Mary Kuester 715-526-3401
SueTemplemanboosue@frontiernet.net

For information about starting a chapter in your area: www.for-wild.org/chapters.html.

CHAPTER ANNIVERSARIES

Kettle Moraine (WI) 1 year
North Oakland (MI) 2 years
Oak Openings Region (OH) 5 years
Red Cedar (MI) 10 years
Root River Area (WI) 11 years
North Park Village Nature Center (IL) 14 years
Otter Tail (MN) 14 years
Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) 20 years



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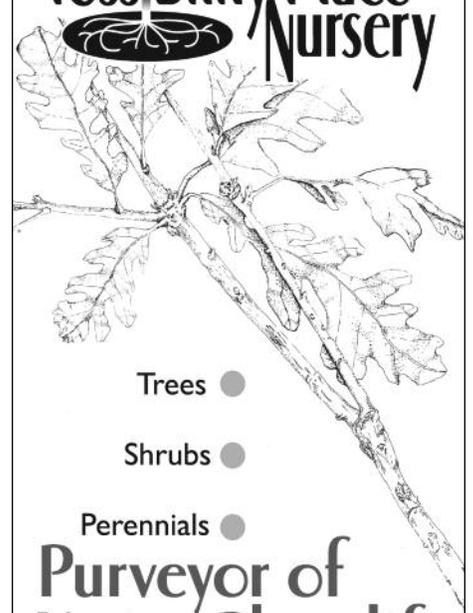


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THANK YOU

Special thanks to all who have responded so generously to our **Wild Ones annual appeal**. There isn't space to name you all in this issue. We will properly recognize your generosity in a future issue of the *Journal*.

NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS

Pat Clancy Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter

John DeLisle & Theresa DeWalls Southeast Michigan (MI) Chapter

MATCHING DONATIONS

Walt Oberheu & Laura Strehlow Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter
Pfizer Foundation 1:1

Lisa Scribner & Dean Doering Twin Cities (MN) Chapter
US Bank 1:1

Nan & Jeff Calvert Root River (WI) Chapter **Abbott Labs 1:2**

Sharon Duerkop Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter **Thrivent Financial 1:1**

GENERAL OPERATING FUND

Diane Bemis, Maryann Whitman Oakland (MI) Chapter

Barbara Vass and the Root River (WI) Chapter

Ruth & Glenn Beach and Eric Nulsen St. Louis (MO) Chapter

JOURNAL FUND – ROOT RIVER CHALLENGE

Door County (WI) Chapter

Green Bay (WI) Chapter

JOURNAL AND WEB SITE SUPPORT

St. Croix Oak Savanna (MN) Chapter

Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

Tom Small Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

Martha F. & Jeffrey Rice Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

SEEDS FOR EDUCATION GRANT PROGRAM

Arlyn Posekany Arrowhead (MN) Chapter

Becky Gale-Gonzalez Flint River (MI) Chapter

Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter

Amm Wakeman Mid-Missouri Chapter

Janice Steinbach Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

Ruby Hannon Partner-at-Large (WI)

Dianne J. & Dennis L. Stenerson Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter

Mebby Pearson Southeast Michigan Chapter

WILD CENTER DEVELOPMENT

Sharon L. Ostrowski Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter

Barbara Gilmore Milwaukee-North (WI) Chapter

Janice Steinbach Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

Martha J. Stoltenberg Partner-at-Large (WI)

Corinne Miller Red Cedar (MI) Chapter

Dianne J. & Dennis L. Stenerson Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter

Ursula Cejpek Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

ADOPT A TURTLE

Holly & Jack Bartholmai, Kathleen & Jeff Hallett, Tracey Koenig and Christine Rademacher Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Tom Small Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

Doris Pierzchalski Menomonee River Area (WI) Chapter

Ellen Luhman Milwaukee-North (WI) Chapter

Carol Flora, Terry & Gail Pavletic, and Carla Staab Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

Jonathan Green & Joy Schochet North Park Village Nature Center (IL) Chapter

Kristen J. Brown Partner-at-Large (WI) and **Denise Meehan** Partner-at-Large (NY)

Christian Nelson Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

ADOPT AN OAK

Rich & Janet Carlson, Sue & Bob Kinde Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Pat Clancy Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter

Mandy & Ken Ploch Menomonee River Area (WI) Chapter (2)

Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter

Maryann Whitman Oakland (MI) Chapter

Marilyn D. Jones Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

DONATIONS IN-KIND

Bob & Susan Grese Her book, *The Native Landscape Reader*. Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter

Michael J. Bunno Eagle Scout Project: Set up Wild Ones library. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Linda K. & Philip L. Grishaber Seeds of golden Alexander and smooth penstemon. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Collin Hofmann Eagle Scout Project: Wildlife houses. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Steve Hull Picking up books from Madison. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Sue & Bob Kinde Seeds and books. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Bob Lieber, R.O. Lieber Photography Gallery Beautiful framed photos of a monarch butterfly on our meadow blazing star. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Christine Rademacher Various prairie seed to be used in our upland restoration efforts. Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter

Tom Small DVD of Doug Tallamy's presentation 10/08. Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

Julia Hart Thirteen varieties of seed for the tallgrass prairie development. Lake-To-Prairie (IL) Chapter

Greg Hamilton U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wisconsin Private Lands Office. Directly paid supplier of the plugs used to develop our short grass pollinator prairie.

Mandy & Ken Ploch Prairie plant seeds, Root & Grow Root Stimulator & Plant Starter and Liquid Fence Deer and Rabbit Repellent, various books, deck chair, gloves, and redbud seedlings. Menomonee River Area (WI) Chapter

Bernice B. Popelka Her book, *Saving Peacock Prairie*. Milwaukee-North (WI) Chapter

Barbara Carrera Milkweed seeds. Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr (WI) Chapter

Lois B. Robbins Her book, *Lawn Wars*, for the Wild Ones library. North Oakland (MI) Chapter

Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter "Doug Tallamy Live at the Elgin Academy" DVD.

Tim & Janaan Lewis Printer with optional sheet tray. Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter

Doug Grant Hose and sprinklers.

NANCY'S GARDEN

Tom Small Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

Kalamazoo Area (MI) Chapter

The Wild Ones Journal Goes Private

The *Wild Ones Journal* has been removed from public access. To read articles in past issues of the *Journal*, please go to the members-only link at the upper right-hand corner of the Wild Ones home page. If you have never registered, here are the directions to do so. To register, just go to the upper right-hand corner of the Wild Ones web site home page, and click on the Members Login button. In the next window, go to the third line, which says, "Member email not registered? Register password for member here." The window which appears next gives you the opportunity to register your e-mail address. You'll need to make up a password. The Internet will search the Wild Ones database to see if your e-mail address matches with what we have there, and if you're active, and if it's satisfied, it will allow you to go to the next step. Here you will need to answer a couple of pretty simple questions. Once answered, you will be sent back to the log-in page from where you should be able to successfully access the *Wild Ones Journal* and your membership data. *



Mark Your Calendars

The Second Wild Ones national Quarterly Board Meeting will be hosted by the **Southeast Michigan Chapter** by web-conference on **May 12, 2012**, at 9 a.m. CST. All Wild Ones members are invited to participate. Contact wildcenter@wildones.org for details.

The Wild Ones Minnesota chapters will host their annual **Design with Nature Conference** on **February 25, 2012**, at Plymouth, Minnesota. Featured conference speaker is Elaine Evans, author of "Befriending Bumblebees." Info: www.wildonestwincities.org.

The 25th Annual Michigan Wildflower Conference will be held **March 4-5, 2012**, on the MSU campus. Honorary Wild Ones Board member Catherine Zimmerman will be speaking on "Meadowscaping in Urban & Suburban Spaces." Info: www.wildflowersmich.org/.

Save the Date. Come and join us for the **2012 Wild Ones Annual Membership Meeting** on Saturday, August 18, at the WILD Center. The annual membership meeting is Saturday, but there will be exciting events happening all weekend (**the 17th – 21st**), including the **3rd quarter national board meeting, marketing and chapter workshops, networking opportunities** – just to name a few. All of these events will be held at a great location (WILD Center), and sponsored by great people (**Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter**) to improve a great organization (Wild Ones). Come and feel the energy of the full organization working together.



Join Wild Ones Get a Gift

Wild Ones celebrates its thirty-third anniversary with a new premium – access to the Top 12 *Journal* articles, a how-to-do-it sampling for all new and renewing members. New and renewing members at the "Wilder" level also get note cards – and at the "Wildest" level also get the 2013 Wild Ones calendar.



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Denise Meehan

OUR NEWEST ECOSCAPER

Partner-at-Large (PAL) Denise Meehan of Centerport, New York, recently completed Level I of the Wild Ones Ecoscaper Program, and received her Ecoscaper lapel pin and Level I charm from her husband, John. Her fieldwork and project included a wildlife-garden design, attendance at a local conference, and an experiment on alternative landscape cloth.

Denise and her husband have gradually been “going native” since 1998. Their house has been in the family for 61 years, and Denise has fond memories of the land and landscape from her childhood. Besides being Wild Ones members, their yard is certified as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat with the National Wildlife Foundation.

“I watched much of this community being built as a child. As an adult I watched it blossom. But with progress, there was also loss. There was less habitat for birds and small mammals. Then I noticed that the land itself had changed. Trees in our yard began to die, and were replaced by Invasive species, notably Norway maples. And it happened quickly.

“When I found the Ecoscaper Program at Wild Ones, I was very excited,

and was determined to complete at least one level. I have neurological disabilities, which did make it more difficult for me at times. But I prevailed. Along the way I learned how the tiniest insects, that feed only on native plants, sustain the wildlife that lives here. I always assumed that ‘similar’ was good enough. I found out it wasn’t.

“There are some established trees I cannot change, but with the knowledge I gained by studying our land, and the voluminous archives at WildOnes.org, I know what to do in

the meantime. I continue to focus on remediating the invasive plants and re-introducing native plants to our landscape. The animals have noticed. We have nesting screech owls and numerous small mammals that thrive side by side. I would love to see more homeowners adopt Ecoscaping.”

There is currently no active chapter of Wild Ones in her part of New York state, which is something Denise would like to see change. “If I can work around my physical limitations in the yard, I would like to think I can do so in the community. This whole process has been very healing for me, and, I believe, for our small portion of Earth.” *



For information about the Ecoscaper program, contact Donna VanBuecken, 877-394-9453 or ecoscaper@wildones.org.