

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



JOURNAL

July/August/September 2012
VOL. 25, NO. 3

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

Phragmites Australis, A Blight On Our Wetlands

By Robert A.L. Williams, Stewart Farm, Harsens Island, Michigan

Phragmites is the common reed plant that has taken over many of our wetlands. It out competes the native plants and creates an exceedingly dense monoculture. It reduces the diversity of plant-life and thereby the overall biodiversity of animal-life. It clogs water intakes, limits views, limits access to lakes, rivers and canals for recreational purposes, reduces property values, and is a fire hazard and a navigation hazard on both waterways and roads.



Before treatment.



After treatment.

In the waterway between Lake Huron and Lake Erie lies Lake St Clair, bisected by the US/Canada border. I live on Harsens Island, at the entry into Lake St. Clair, just north of Detroit, Michigan. Harsens Island is part of Clay Township which consists of a portion of mainland Michigan and about a dozen islands. Our township has over 8600 acres of phragmites. We have more phragmites than any other township in Southeast Michigan, primarily due to the fact that so much of our township is wetlands. It's great to live in an area dominated by wetlands, but not when most of the wetlands have been overtaken by one plant, such as phragmites.

About seven years ago I started battling the 12 acres of phragmites on our 53 acre farm of lakeplain prairie, woods and wetlands. I am winning the battle and am now treating the phragmites on my neighbors' properties and serving on our township's phragmites management advisory board. The board has trained over 250 residents in the control of phragmites and has helped them obtain the required State permits. We are on the right track to taking back control of our wetland ecosystems.

Phragmites' strengths

There is a native variety of phragmites which behaves itself and plays well with other plants, but the invasive variety does not. It moves in, out competes all other species, quickly creates a monoculture of phragmites and provides little or no benefit to local wildlife. Each year it sprouts anew from the root system to a height of up to fourteen feet. The rhizomatous root system can spread horizontally in the ground up to 30 feet in a single year, with new sprouts coming up every six inches along the way. Cutting it, even on a regular basis, will have little effect on its strength or health. Allowing animals such as goats to graze it has proven to reduce the phragmites while the grazing continues, but the phragmites will return to full strength within months of the removal of the animals. Attempting to control it by digging or pulling it out does not work. Any small bits of the root system which are not removed will just re-sprout and spread. Within a few years it will be as if you had removed nothing at all.

Drowning Phragmites

Luckily science and research have found the plant's weaknesses. It can be controlled by drowning or by treatment with certain herbicides, applied at the right time of the year. A combination of the two is the most effective method of control but not usually available to the average land owner.

Share Your Passion



Just over 16 years ago, I started gardening with native plants. I became more interested in natives because two very passionate people inspired me. The memory is etched into my mind. After buying a few natives at Enders Greenhouse in Cherry Valley, IL, as I was going out the door, the owner, Anne Meyer, and an employee, Fran Lowman, suggested to me that I should join Wild Ones. I said that I was not interested in

joining another "club" but they kept talking and convinced me to go to a meeting.

I kept telling my wife during the meeting that I was not joining this group, but the program had me paying attention. The announcement about the next meeting sounded interesting too, so I attended that one as well. I have been a member since.

I know that Anne and Fran have shared their love of native plants with countless people in our area. Many of these folks will tell you that one or the other inspired them to plant natives and that they too have become passionate about natives.

Over the past decade and half, I have met a lot of people who were passionate about healing the Earth through environmentally sound practices. Many of them will never know of how their passion inspired me. Some inspiring people, like Lorrie Otto, Aldo Leopold, and John Muir, I've never met.

Bret Rappaport, our vice president, tells of taking his young children to Lorrie Otto's house and how she took the kids around her native yard. She planted seeds in the kids and inspired Bret and his wife Jina. All of their four children are now in or embarking on careers that will help the world in one way or another.

Think about how you found out about Wild Ones and developed a love of native plants. Was your introduction by a passionate person? Have others shaped your interest in native plants?

Shared, our passions can move from person to person like ripples of wind across a prairie. We may never meet some of the people upon whom we had an effect, but we can feel good about having made a difference. Isn't that what is important—that we share information about what we love without expecting to be recognized for it? Let's pass on the ripples. 🌿

Tim Lewis, Wild Ones National President (president@wildones.org)

WILD ONES HONORARY DIRECTORS

The following honorary directors' terms expire January 2013:

Joyce Bender, Thomas Barnes, Bob Grese,
Lynn Steiner, and Doug Tallamy.

We are seeking new nominees or re-nomination of these directors to continue. Please let us hear from you as soon as possible with your recommendations.

Welcome National Board Members

Wild Ones has two new national board members for the term 2012-2016.

Please welcome **Dan Segal** a Partner-at-Large from New York
and **Bill Snyder** from Illinois Prairie Chapter.

They are a welcome addition to the business end of running Wild Ones.
Continuing with their national board duties are Tim Lewis, Karen Syverson,
Steve Windsor, Bret Rappaport and Rick Webb.

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 ABOUT MONARCHS CAMPAIGN

At this year's Annual Membership Meeting, the national board, chapter boards and members were introduced to a new partnership for Wild Ones. Wild Ones is partnering with the Monarch Joint Venture Program, <http://www.monarchjointventure.org/> The Monarch Joint Venture Program (MJV) is a partnership organization focused on protecting monarchs and their migration across the lower 48 United States. Other partners in this program:

*Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Monarch Butterfly Fund
Monarchs in the Classroom
Monarch Watch
Natural Resources Conservation Service
North American Butterfly Association
Pollinator Partnership
The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service*

The Joint Venture program is committed to a science-based approach to monarch conservation work, guided by the North American Monarch Conservation Plan (2008) http://www.cec.org/Storage/62/5431_Monarch_en.pdf Along with the Monarch Joint Venture partnership, Wild Ones will also be partnering with Monarch Watch's "Bring Back the Monarch" Campaign which focuses on increasing the number and variety of milkweed plants growing throughout the USA. <http://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/campaign> Milkweeds serve as the host plant for Monarchs everywhere. Watch for more info on this partnership and for the Wild Ones for Monarchs Campaign for 2013. Details will be forthcoming via future Journals and Executive Director e-newsletters.

Monarch Matters

By Candy Sarikonda



The monarch migration is in danger. Monarchs need our help. Since the late 1990s, monarchs spending the winter in Mexico have declined from 1 billion to as little as 100 million. In the California overwintering sites, researchers have found that the monarch population has declined from 1.25 million in 1997 to just 58,468 in 2009. (How do we know exact numbers of monarchs overwintering in the western (CA) sites, whereas we can only give a general estimate of the size of the overwintering population in Mexico? Well, that's one for another edition of Monarch Matters!) The World Wildlife Fund has declared the monarch migration endangered. Monarch caterpillars feed only on milkweed—nothing else. The monarch population has declined due to the loss of milkweed habitat in the U.S., where monarchs

breed each summer. In Mexico, illegal logging and climate change have led to degradation of the forests where monarchs overwinter. These degraded forests are less able to protect monarchs during winter storms, and a severe storm can kill up to 80% of the overwintering monarchs!

If we want to save Monarchs, we have to save milkweed. I believe we can help the monarchs. One person can make a difference. If every Wild Ones member planted just one milkweed, think of the 100s of milkweeds that would be available for the monarchs to lay their eggs on! And by planting milkweed, you wouldn't just be helping monarchs. You would be helping the many pollinators that obtain nectar from milkweed flowers too! So let's help all of our pollinators. Plant a milkweed, or a pollinator-friendly nectar plant.

Native nectar plants such as flowers and flowering trees and shrubs can supply monarchs with nectar all season long. For a list of the best nectar plants, go to monarchwatch.org or check butterfly gardening books at your local library. If you would really like to help monarchs, then plant several milkweeds and nectar plants in your garden, and have your garden certified by Monarch Watch as a Monarch Waystation! Certifying your garden as a Waystation will help show support for monarch conservation. You can create a monarch waystation at schools, businesses, places of worship, nature centers, hospitals—anywhere you can find a patch of dirt! So PLEASE, help save the monarchs! I know you can.

Bring Back the Monarch!

Check out our new t-shirt available at the Wild Store!



The graphic on this natural color shirt highlights native wildflowers and America's favorite—the monarch. The design was drawn exclusively for us by a very talented member.

See the Wild Store for details!
www.wildones.org/store/

Authors & Artists

Pat Hill, co-charter President of the Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter, she is the author of *Design Your Natural Midwest Garden*.

Robert Williams is a long time member of Wild Ones SE Michigan Chapter.

Janet Allen, a contributing editor for the Journal, is a member of the Habitat Gardening in Central New York Chapter.

Mariette Nowak, president of Kettle Moraine Chapter in (WI), is the author of *Birdscaping in the Midwest*, and contributing editor for the Wild Ones Journal.

Candy Sarikonda is a member of the Wild Ones Oak Openings (OH) Chapter.

Betty Struckhoff is Membership Chair of the St Louis (MO) Chapter and **Fran Glass** serves as Secretary.

Mark Charles, of the Ann Arbor Chapter (MI), serves as National SFE Director.

Constance McCarthy is President of the Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter.

Reaching Out to Others Who Support the Good Earth

By Betty Struckhoff and Fran Glass

A perennial issue comes up in board discussions of the St. Louis (MO) Chapter of Wild Ones:

How do we engage new audiences who are receptive to the idea of native landscaping without finding ourselves “singing to the choir”?

Several years ago one board member proposed that we staff a booth for the St. Louis Earth Day festival in the city's Forest Park. The thousands of people attending this event are interested in a lifestyle that preserves and sustains our environment, but they may not have thought of their yards as one part of supporting that goal. We first opted to participate in 2010.

How to engage people? What about a simple quiz with a prize just for participating? Because our audience was not expected to be into native landscaping or even gardening, we made it easy and fun. Questions such as “Name a benefit of growing native plants.” were written on colorful paper and laminated like an oversized deck of cards. Wild Ones members staffing the booth could just shuffle the deck of questions and ask participants to pull one out.

No clue about the answer? Look up and all the answers were written in bold letters on a sheet in the back of the booth. For example, answers to “Name a benefit...” would include: flourish without fertilizer; contribute to biodiversity and conserve water. Other questions concerned definitions of native plants, invasive species and rain gardens.

The quiz was an icebreaker and led to discussions of the benefits of native landscaping. Everyone who participated received one of 300 Golden Currant seedlings that we distributed. Others just

stopped to chat and we estimate about 500 people were exposed to the idea of native landscaping. We repeated the event in April of 2011 and distributed 375 Ninebark seedlings.

The booth helps us promote our other educational and service activities throughout the year. Teachers learn about our grants available for school gardens. We have supported two new school gardens through contacts made at Earth Day. The public learns about our annual Landscape Challenge contest wherein we give away a front yard makeover every September. We promote the outstanding “Native Plant School” which is sponsored by Shaw Nature Reserve and financially supported by our Wild Ones chapter. We have also attracted new members.

By 2012, Earth Day had become an established part of our annual calendar. People stopped by the booth to tell us how their Ninebark seedlings were thriving and to pick up this year's selection, Witch-hazel. (We gave away 400!) To keep the quiz fresh, we cut apart the pages of the excellent 2012 Wild Ones calendar and arranged them with a few yellow signs highlighting benefits of native landscaping. We asked festival attendees: “Are any of these benefits important to you?” “Do any of these benefits entice you to add native plants to your existing landscape?” The calendar photos of butterfly and dragonfly offered talking points for children. We noted the

importance of using natives in every canopy of the landscape. Both of the teachers whose grant proposals we awarded came to our booth to thank us. Their enthusiasm is infectious and one of them sees her project as just the start of a much larger native landscape effort on her campus.

We've streamlined the preparation of the seedlings by doing it a day ahead of time. The bare-root seedlings, purchased from the Missouri Department of Conservation, are wrapped in wet newspaper and placed in plastic newspaper delivery bags. A small label identifies the plant and directs people to our chapter's website for more information. On Earth Day, our members volunteer in two-hour shifts, giving them time to spend at the other activities of the festival.

The Earth Day participation is a significant commitment by the St. Louis Wild Ones Chapter in terms of both volunteer time and financial outlay. Our board considers it a commitment that is well worth it. We are reaching a new audience, educating them about native landscaping in a way that's fun and, last but not least, our volunteers have a great time doing it. 🐾

* * * * *

Other native plants games such as this are available on the Wild Ones website at <http://www.wildones.org/download/games/>

What's new and the WILD Center —Thanks to generous Chapter Donations



Thanks to a donation from Wild Ones Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter, the Wild Ones headquarters has a new office for Marketing Assistant Jamie Fuerst and more open meeting space. The Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter board has arranged to rent meeting space from the WILD Center for their regular board meetings and some of their monthly speaker presentations during the past couple of years. Through this use, they realized the meeting space could be enlarged dramatically by enlarging the opening between the living room and the former dining room. They offered to pay for the remodeling if we would allow it, and they also agreed to pay for remodeling the extravagant downstairs bathroom to office space for Jamie. All remodeling managed to get done the Tuesday before annual meeting. Thank you Wild Ones Fox Valley Area.

Thanks to the Wild Ones Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter, the WILD Center has a new site sign. It took some effort to get all the proper permitting, but we had the sign installed in time for the Annual Membership Meeting. It's a beauty! Thank you Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter for your generous donation.

Working toward understanding Native Plants: Secondary Metabolites.

Have you ever wondered why it is, that to reproduce Monarch butterflies need milkweed; and why there actually are plants deer dislike; and why northeastern squirrels prefer white oak acorns to those of red oaks? Why, field guides of plants, insects and butterflies, use the term 'host plant'? What is the connection between the evolutionary kingdoms?

In the May/June 2008 issue of the *Journal* we launched a series, *Mysteries Explored*, in which we offered to explore the validity of our claim that working with native plant communities lets us practice ecologically sound landscaping and helps us preserve biodiversity. It is also our way of exploring the nature of native plants.

In the Jan/Feb issue of 2010 of the *Journal*, in the article titled *Buckthorn, Birds and Diarrhea* we looked at how one particular genus of fruit producing plants interacts with birds that are its evolutionary cohorts and others, on a different continent, that are, in essence, evolutionary strangers. One set of birds has adapted to the defenses of the plant; the other set has not. The plant is 'native' to one set and 'alien' to another set.



Spicebush swallowtail caterpillar on its preferred food—spicebush. Photo credit Betty Hall

The critical aspect of these interspecies interactions came down to a chemical that the buckthorn produces. This chemical is in no way vital to the plant's life-critical cellular function; the plant could perform photosynthesis without it; it could bear fertile fruit and thereby reproduce itself: this is not a 'primary metabolite'. And yet the plant expends energy to produce this chemical—this 'secondary metabolite'. For what purpose?

Since plants are firmly rooted in the ground and are not able to voluntarily knock an enemy for a loop, they have developed another avenue of defense. The secondary metabolites defend against other organisms, predators that endanger the plant — organisms that might eat its leaves, burrow into its fluid-transport systems, chew on its roots; organisms that might prematurely take its fruit. They attract pollinators and seed dispersers.

The process of producing these chemicals is something that evolves in a plant species over evolutionary time. Plants that have more or less of this chemical, upon interacting with their predators, have different survival rates, and pass on their varying production rates to their off-spring.

The organisms against which the plant is defending (let's continue with the birds in this example, but you may also think in terms of insects and mammals), in their turn, are dependent on the plant for food, and need to evolve ways to deal with/adapt to the defensive strategies of the plant. Over evolutionary time this give and take is smoothed out and the two very different species, from two separate evolutionary Kingdoms, come to serve each other's purposes to the benefit of both. They may even become entirely reliant on each other for survival.

The birds that co-evolved over millennia in the same geographic space as the buckthorn have learned to recognize when the fruit is ready to eat — when it will no longer cause life threatening diarrhea; and, incidentally, coincident with the best time to spread the plant's seeds far and wide.

The chemical that at one time was a defensive mechanism, is no longer necessary for that purpose and the plant reduces the rate of production, resulting in a lower concentration (this reaction, too, may be the result of interacting hormonal/chemical levels within the plant).

In the bird, this lower concentration has a paradoxical effect: what once, earlier in the season, caused debilitating diarrhea, now causes prolonged gut retention. The bird is rewarded by being able to extract more food value from the fruit; the seeds, being retained longer, are removed and deposited at a distance from the mother plant, decreasing chances for competition within the plant family. Both plant and animal benefit.

When this same plant is thrust into the presence of bird species, in a different ecoregion that have not coevolved with it, the evolutionary adjustments and balances are tossed out the window! The plant continues to produce its secondary metabolites but those birds without the

advantage of convergent evolution are without the mechanisms necessary to deal with these metabolites and are, in fact, damaged by them.

Another plant/animal interaction that involves secondary metabolites is one we are familiar with. That is the relationship between the Monarch butterfly and the milkweed plant. While many insects are able to take and use the nectar of the milkweed, the larva of the Monarch butterfly is one of the few that is able to feed on the leaves of the plant. In fact the milkweed is the only plant the monarch caterpillar can feed on. Lacking milkweed the caterpillar will starve to death. The very chemicals in the milkweed that are toxic to other insects (and birds that eat the insects that feed on milkweed) are necessary to the monarch's body chemistry, and thereby for its survival.

Secondary metabolites may well be the basis for most of the food preferences of which we are aware in insects and mammals. Almost invariably they are products of convergent evolution that took place over many thousands of years.

Here we have another aspect of the definition of what is a native plant: it is a plant that plays a supportive role in its environment—a role that has co-evolved over time, interacting with other organisms in the same environment.

It is also one more reason why reproducing native plant communities in our gardens and natural areas is important. 🌱

In a recent paper in *Science Magazine* (*Science* 29 June 2012. If you Google DOI:10.1126/science.1217411 you'll find the paper at www.researchgate.net/), the authors write the following in their Introduction.

A variety of compounds, from pigments and flavors to volatile scents and antimicrobials, mediate an array of interspecies interactions that seduce pollinators and seed dispersers or deter pathogens and herbivores. Unlike primary metabolites required for central metabolism, specialized compounds are often biosynthesized in response to environmental cues or as a consequence of growth and development.

In short, it is likely that these phytochemicals shape the interdependencies and diversity of plantecosystems forming the base of the global food chain.



Photo credit Bonnie Lore. A highway rest area with a native planting.

Highway Welcome Centers

By Janet Allen

Along interstate highways, the first rest area in each state is usually a Welcome Center. "Welcome to our state" the signs proclaim...and then we're greeted by landscaping that would more appropriately welcome us to China or Europe. Hosta, daylilies, Rose of Sharon, butterfly bushes, chrysanthemums, Japanese barberries, Russian sage—in short, almost anything but native plants. What an odd welcome to their state!

On our last trip, I noticed many of these Welcome Centers have either post card questionnaires to mail to the state's facilities management or comment cards you can drop into an on-site box. When we Wild Ones are traveling the interstates, why not use these opportunities to suggest they feature some of that state's own native plants? We could also suggest they create Monarch Waystations or pollinator gardens at their rest areas. Signage explaining the plantings—similar to the historical signage they often display—could identify these native plants and explain these special gardens to their interstate visitors.

In addition to submitting official written comments, it's interesting to talk with the people staffing these centers, even though they aren't in charge of the Center's landscaping. I started one conversation by mentioning I had noticed some milkweed in the garden beds. From the look on his face, I gathered he had heard this comment before, but instead as a complaint. He was surprised when I suggested it would be a good start for a Monarch Waystation. Another staff person explained they had planted chrysanthemums because "they had to have something blooming in fall." Hmmm... like goldenrods or asters perhaps? In a third state, after explaining what I was writing on my comment card, the staff person responded, "Good luck with that!"

This may indeed be a quixotic endeavor, but it would be good for states to know that travelers are interested in seeing plants native to each state and that not everyone regards milkweed as just a weed. The next time you're in a Welcome Center, take advantage of this opportunity to advocate for monarchs, pollinators, and native plants! 🐛

Tim Lewis Receives Seth B. Atwood Conservation Award

By Constance McCarthy

Tim Lewis, the national president of Wild Ones and former president of the Rock River Valley Chapter, will receive the 2012 Seth B. Atwood Conservation Award in Rockford, Illinois on April 26, 2012. The award is given annually to recognize an individual or organization for exceptional contributions in providing facilities, programs, or services in the areas of parks, recreation, and conservation. The Atwood Award is presented by the Rockford Park District, the Rockford Park District Foundation, and the Winnebago County Forest Preserve District.

The award memorializes Seth B. Atwood, who served as a Rockford Park District board member from 1928 to 1960, and 18 of those years he served as president. During his 32 years of service, he donated and preserved over 1,000 acres of valuable natural heritage in Winnebago County. He was a true conservationist in both his public and private life.

Tim and his wife Janaan developed a love of nature while landscaping their home with native plants, and hiking and camping in the mountains of western Montana. They joined Wild Ones in 1996, shortly after the Rock River Valley chapter

was formed. While working at Enders Greenhouse near Rockford, he increased his knowledge of natives and found that he especially liked teaching customers about the virtues of natural landscaping.

Tim began organizing plant rescues for Wild Ones, helping to save thousands of native plants that would have otherwise been doomed by developers' bulldozers. He has also encouraged and mentored many people who wanted to learn more about landscaping in a more environmentally sound manner.

He was elected president of the Rock River Valley chapter in 2003, serving in that position for four years. Tim went on to serve as president of the Four Rivers Environmental Coalition for four years, leading a diverse group of over 30 "green" organizations in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin; he still serves as the chapter's representative to the Coalition. Tim has continued to serve the Rock River Valley chapter as the coordinator of the chapter's display, connecting with groups that are organizing events where a Wild Ones presence is desired. He trains volunteers and maintains an extensive collection of literature that can be shared



Photo credit C. McCarthy. Janaan and Tim Lewis.

with prospective members and folks who just want to learn more about Wild Ones and natural landscaping.

In 2009, Tim was also named Conservationist of the Year by the Mississippi Audubon Society. He continues to speak at conferences and symposia on how to get started with natives, how to photograph natives, and starting natives from seed. 🐛

Lorrie Otto Seeds For Education Program

Lorrie Otto's philosophy of healing the Earth one yard at a time was the inspiration for the beginning of Wild Ones in 1979.

To honor her and her passion (Lorrie Otto was instrumental in ridding the United States of DDT), the Wild Ones developed the Lorrie Otto Seeds For Education Program and Endowment in 1996. Educating young people about the wonders of native plants was important to Lorrie.

To date we have given out 162 grants for outdoor learning centers for a total of \$54,132, all thanks to our Wild Ones member donors. It is our goal to be able to supplement donations with endowment earnings at some time in the future.

Fall, when Lorrie's birthday occurred, has traditionally been the time when we remind member to send birthday-present-donations to honor Lorrie. Please send your gifts—and please remind your chapter boards to send their contributions, either to the endowment, or to help fund awards in 2013. 🐿



Photo credit Ney Tait Fraser.

Seeds For Education Awards 2012 Part 2

By Mark Charles

Since our beginning, Wild Ones members and chapters have supported young people's efforts to establish native plants and seeds in their communities. We've supported projects where children and teens create butterfly gardens, restore prairie, woodland and wetland habitats, or create outdoor classrooms in schoolyards, parks, and other public spaces.

For more than 15 years, Wild Ones have supported these projects through the Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant program. We award small financial grants annually to projects that focus on children's initiative and use native plants. The awards help the projects gain legitimacy in their communities, and provide a boost to the morale of adult leaders. Equally important, Wild Ones members and SFE Nursery Partners provide advice, local knowledge, and a listening ear.

Your donations and volunteer hours support diverse and exciting projects across the United States. Some of the 2012 awards were announced in the previous issue. Here are the others:

In Honolulu, Hawai'i, students at Saint Louis School are planting indigenous hibiscus, gardenias, and other native plants. Students in 6th and 9th grades researched the plant species, and hope to attract the Kamehameha butterfly.

Students at Northern Illinois University, Lorado Taft Field Campus in Oregon, IL, are planting native forbs, grasses and shrubs to support birds and beneficial insects with food and cover. This is creating an outdoor education laboratory for elementary students, with help from the Rock River Valley chapter.

The North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill, NC, is working with children aged 10-13 to research, design, and plant a garden for pollinators. Students are taking a leadership role in every step of the process, including site analysis and preparation, selection of appropriate native plants, and installation.

Third and fifth grade students at Frelinghuysen Elementary School (Johnsonburg, NJ) are native plants and shrubs to the border of the school's outdoor classroom. They note that maple leaf viburnum and winterberry holly will provide better shelter and resting points for local and migrating birds than the ailanthus trees that have been removed from the site.

Children in the United North Amityville Youth Organization (Amityville, NY) are using their award to buy native plants that

reflect the natural communities of Long Island, such as grassland, beach and pine barren. The children also chose plants that would attract wildlife, including "hummingbirds, butterflies, cardinals, and rabbits."

At Highland High School (also in New York State) students in the Organic Living class are adding native flowering and fruit-bearing plants to an existing streamside learning area at the school. Blueberries and fox grapes are among the species that will enhance the site.

Students at Avon Grove Charter School in West Grove, PA, are enhancing plant diversity on a constructed xeric limestone prairie. They are adding sedges, native grasses, zig-zag and blue-stem goldenrod along with species they have propagated from plants already on the site. They write that an afterschool team works every Thursday, year round, and is "constantly working to suppress multiflora rose, autumn olive, princess tree, English plantain, burning bush, porcelain berry, and other invasives."

Austintown Middle School from Youngstown, Ohio is creating a pollinator garden to expand the outdoor learning area into the community, enhancing the wetland area with native plants while building stronger ties with several new partnerships. They hope to improve land and water quality further upstream from the wetlands situated on their school property and the township park across the street.

Is there a youth project like this underway at a school or park near you? Please give them a hand, and tell them about our potential support. We're delighted to see applications from existing projects, as well as first efforts. 🐿



Applications for 2013 awards are due October 15, 2012. They must be submitted by email, using a prescribed form. See the Wild Ones web site for detailed instructions, <http://www.wildones.org/seedmony.html> or contact Mark Charles, SFE Volunteer Coordinator, at SFEDirector@wildones.org

Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Study provides first evidence of coevolution between invasive, native species

Press release; University of Georgia: Invasive species such as kudzu, privet and garlic mustard can devastate ecosystems, and, until now, scientists had little reason to believe that native plants could mount a successful defense.

"The implications of this study are encouraging because they show that the native plants aren't taking this invasion lying down," said study author Richard Lankau. "It suggests that if you were to take a longer view—a timescale of centuries—that exotic species could become integrated into their communities in a way that is less problematic for the natives."

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) was introduced to the U.S. from Europe roughly 150 years ago first in New York and Virginia and then to the Chicago area. The noxious plant continues to spread rapidly throughout the Northeast, Midwest and Southeast. "It's a pretty well-hated plant," Lankau said, because it can form dense carpets in forest understories and, even after being physically removed from an area, can reestablish itself within a year.

Much of the plant's success is a result of the chemical warfare it wages with a compound known as sinigrin, which kills mycorrhizal fungi that help native plants extract nutrients from the soil. The chemical is relatively new to North America, and this novelty gives garlic mustard a huge competitive advantage.

Through a series of greenhouse and field experiments conducted over three years in five states, Lankau has shown that invasive garlic mustard produces more sinigrin in areas where more local plants are present. He found that native clearweed (*Pilea pumila*) plants, which were chosen for the study because they occupy the same forest understory habitat, show higher levels of resistance to sinigrin in areas where the two species have a longer history of coexistence.

"It looks like the native plants have evolved in response to the

traits of the invader," Lankau said.

In addition to transplanting clearweed seeds back to their sites of origin, Lankau also planted them in all of the other study sites and monitored their growth. Each site has its unique soil chemistry and climate, and Lankau said he expected the plants to exhibit a home-field advantage. Instead, he found that native plants resistant to the invader did best in heavily invaded sites, regardless of where they originated. Surprisingly, he found that plants resistant to sinigrin actually did worse than their less-resistant-plant counterparts in areas where there was little or no garlic mustard.

"It's not all good for those populations that are evolving tolerance," Lankau said. "Because they are less successful in the absence of garlic mustard, their resistance to the invasive species comes at a cost."

Taken together, the findings suggest that the native and invasive species could reach equilibrium over a long period of time. Lankau said the study also raises the possibility that humans can help speed the adaptation of ecosystems to invasive species. He explained that removing invasive species and replanting natives often results in failure but replacing invasive species with native plants from an area where the plants have had time to adapt to the invader could be more effective. Rather than replanting clearweed from a recently invaded site in Michigan, for example, land managers could use plants from New York that are more likely to be resistant to garlic mustard.

"When people talk about evolution, it's usually in the past tense," Lankau said. "But one of the important messages from this study is that it's an ongoing process that can happen fast. And this study suggests that we might be able to jumpstart that process through evolutionarily informed management." 🍇

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Drowning can be accomplished by a variety of methods. In some larger marsh areas dikes and pumps are present which can be used to raise the water level as needed. However, this is unlikely to be an option in most wetlands. Another method would be to cut the stems below the water line. In that case the lower they are cut the better. The stems will re-sprout from the next nodule below the cut point, which is usually within 6" down the stem. To assure drowning the stems must be recut as soon as the re-sprouts break the waterline. Over time you will weaken the plant, as it is deprived of the oxygen it needs. If the phragmites you are trying to drown are adjacent to phragmites that is not being drowned, you may be wasting your time. The root systems are all interconnected, and the plants you are trying to drown will just get their oxygen from the adjacent stems. The old dead phragmites stems from previous years also are used by the root system to get the oxygen it needs and therefore need to be cut below the waterline.

In areas where you can get out on the ice during the winter, it is recommended that you remove all old stems clean at the ice line. In most cases the water level will rise a bit in the spring and will cover the tops of the cut stems. If you are attempting to drown phragmites that is connected with phragmites above the water level, you will need to work on killing that phragmites as well, or the same borrowing of oxygen will occur. Since the phragmites above the water level cannot be drowned, you will need to resort to chemical control in that area.

Chemical Control

There are two herbicides used in the control of phragmites, imazapyr and glyphosate. Imazapyr can be used in the summer as well as the fall, while glyphosate will only work if used in the fall. Imazapyr is a restricted chemical and therefore can only be obtained by or used by certified pesticide applicators. That leaves glyphosate as the homeowner's only option for herbicide control of phragmites. Glyphosate only works in the fall because it needs to be drawn down into the root system to work, and this will only happen if applied while the plant is preparing to go dormant for the winter. Glyphosate is the active ingredient in Roundup, the well-known weed killer available in just about every hardware store in the country. However, Roundup has many chemicals in it besides the glyphosate, many of which are very harmful to aquatic life. For that reason you should never use Roundup over or near water where it might end

up in the water.

Glyphosate is available for aquatic use under a variety of brand names such as Accord, Aquamaster, Aquaneat, AquaPro, AquaStar, Eagle, Glyfos, Glypro, Rodeo, and Shoreklear. In addition to the herbicide a surfactant should be used in the mix to allow the herbicide to better stick to the plant and to break down the waxy coating of the leaves and stems. There are a broad range of surfactants available. The one I use is called Cygnet Plus.

The herbicide and the surfactant will have instructions for the appropriate quantities of each chemical to use in the mix, as established by the EPA. Remember, "The Label is the Law."

If you want a guideline for how much to order, you should know that for a glyphosate product of the most common strength (53.8% a.i.) the maximum amount of glyphosate allowed by law is four to six pints per acre per treatment, and you will probably be using about one pint per acre of surfactant.

On preparing your mix it is important to use clean, clear water; organic matter in the water can counteract the effects of the herbicide.

Application of Herbicide

The most common means of delivery of the herbicide is a sprayer of some kind. One disadvantage of the sprayer is that it tends to be difficult to control this

application of a herbicide mix that is non-selective—it will kill any plants with which it comes in contact. In sensitive natural areas, with some remaining presence of native plants, you may need to hand apply the mix using the "glove of death" method. You can Google that if you are not familiar with it. Another option would be to wipe it on each plant with tongs that have absorbent pads attached. You may learn more about such an applicator at www.phragmites.org.

Some people prefer to cut the stems and dab on a concentrated version of the herbicide mix, much the way you would do with cut stump treatments of woody invasives.

Dealing with standing, dead plant material

Burning is a possibility, but, that must be done by an experienced prescribed burn contractor. I prefer to cut down all of the old winter-dead material prior my first application of herbicide. Under the right winter conditions you can conveniently walk out on the ice to do this. Cutting it in the winter, while the ground is frozen, provides for minimal soil disturbance. The new stand of phragmites grows though the dead material. This allows easier access during the fall treatment and reduces wasted chemical on dead stems that will not take the herbicide to the roots. Removing the dead material from the site can be a big project, so instead, I rake it onto trails which I know are normally too wet.

A few things to keep in mind

Don't expect to see any effects on the plant from the chemicals for about two weeks. It takes a while to get to the root system. Do not cut the phragmites within six weeks prior to a chemical treatment or within two weeks following the treatment. Do not spray after the first killing frost. Many states require permits for any herbicide spraying over standing water or for cutting vegetation on shorelines. When using chemicals wear appropriate personal protective gear and follow all instructions on the label.

Whether drowning or applying herbicides you should expect this to be about a three year process to get the phragmites 99% under control. Do not expect complete eradication. For any area where phragmites grew for a couple of years, there will be a large seed bank that will need to be monitored for re-sprouting. It will be like controlling the dandelions in your lawn; you will need to be vigilant. 🍄

*This is a manageable plant.
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Before treatment.



After treatment.

Underplanting trees: Mulching with sedges

By Pat Hill

"What in the world is a sedge?" you ask. You see them all the time in woods and probably think that they are grasses. "Sedges have edges" is a common aphorism, which while not quite true all the time, is true enough that it can be an easy identification of the genus. Its stems are hard and triangular and therefore, have edges; while the stems of grasses are round and hollow.

Penn Sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*), one of the most common woodland sedges, in bloom in April. Penn Sedge forms colonies of light green, grassy leaves less than 1' tall. It's found in patches in oak savannas. Not surprisingly, another name for it is Common Oak Sedge. This is a sedge that will grow in a good deal of sunlight.



Newly planted Penn Sedge under my new Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) on my parkway. Prairie Alum Root (*Heuchera richardsonii*) at edge of sidewalk.



Two years later, same planting with wild geranium planted among the sedge.



Sprengel's or Long-beaked Sedge (*Carex sprengelii*) is a showy, clump-forming sedge with narrow, arching leaves that somewhat resembles the grass prairie drop seed in size and look. It is found in shady, moist areas near streams, along trails, and in wooded ravine slopes in nature; in the home garden it grows well in average soil in part or full shade. It increases by short, creeping rhizomes, forming colonies; flowers prettily in May; as the seeds form in summer, the flower stems arch gracefully.



Common wood sedge (*Carex blanda*) with Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginiana*), Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*), and red trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*) growing under a hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Its coarse, evergreen leaves are often found in lawns. When mown over with the lawn mower constantly the blades stretch out horizontally over the lawn in a flat 6"-12" circle. If grown in a woodland or garden, however, they are grow upright and are quite attractive.

Question: But won't the sedge plants compete with the tree for moisture? Won't they require extra watering?

No. Unlike turf grass, sedges have dense, fibrous root systems that hold water. 1/3 of those roots die every year, decomposing, and adding moisture, CO₂, and organic matter to the soil.

I here quote from Gerould Wilhelm and Laura Rericha, from *Timberhill Savanna Assessment of Landscape Management* (pg. 7, April 2007):

Moisture needs of landscapes in general, whether remnant or de novo, during the growing season, are usually in excess of the amount of rain falling at that time, particularly in continental climates where rainfall is irregular during the growing season. The soil must act as a storehouse that sustains water during both the growing season and dormant period. To make this possible, two requirements must be met: the precipitation that falls must enter the soil in a process called infiltration, and the soil must have a large water-holding capacity that is able to retain much water. Both these requirements require a well aggregated soil.

The only way to sustain a balanced level of soil organic matter in such systems in the North Temperate Zone is for graminoid root systems to pervade the rhizosphere, die constantly, and then partially decompose in accordance with a system's inherent redox environment. ...When all this is in balance and stable a soil can be said to be healthy.

Other Charming and Useful Woodland Sedges

Partial to full shade, mesic to dry-mesic soil

Carex gracillima - Purple-sheathed Graceful Sedge

Carex jamesii - Grass Sedge

Carex pedunculata - Long stalked Hummock Sedge

Carex plantaginea - Plantain-leaved Sedge

Carex radiata - Straight-styled Wood Sedge



Palm sedge (*Carex muskingumensis*), a branched sedge, likes moist shade; just like sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*).

Reference with good pictures:

http://fm2.fieldmuseum.org/plantguides/guide_pdfs/384-01.pdf

Reprinted with permission. Blog posting by Pat Hill (<http://naturalmidwestgarden.com/archives/1939>). The photos are hers. She is the author of Design you Natural Midwest Garden.

2012 WILD ONES PHOTO CONTEST VOTING

This year's photo contest entries are in and are ready for you to select the People's Choice.



Just go to the members' only webpages by October 31, 2012 and chose the best photo for 2012 by checking the box. People's Choice will be announced in the next issue of the Wild Ones Journal.

<http://www.wildones.org/members/photo.cgi>

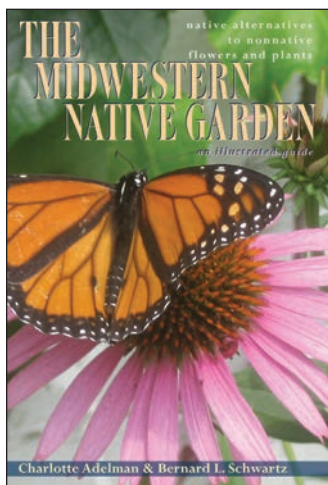


JOAN RUDOLPH – WILD ONES NEWEST STAFF MEMBER



Introducing Joan Rudolph, Wild Ones Assistant to the Executive Director. Joan takes care of all membership records, sends out merchandise and fills orders for Wild Ones promotional materials. She's typically the voice behind the phone when you call on Tuesday,

Wednesday and Friday. When she's not working for Wild Ones, she's working for a local Fox Valley florist and enjoys gardening in her own yard. We're delighted to have Joan working with us. She brings a level of consistency to the home office. 🌿



BOOK REVIEW

THE MIDWESTERN NATIVE GARDEN, AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE.

By Maryann Whitman

Charlotte Adelman and Bernard Schwartz's book *The Midwestern Native Garden*, continues, enlarges, and adds specific recommendations to a message developed by a century of botanists, gardeners, landscape architects, restorationists, entomologists and biologists. In

fact all those who recognized the importance of plants that are native to a given geographic area. The book provides a resource essential to the types of decisions we need to make as gardeners who, by our actions in our own backyard, influence the biodiversity and sustainability of life on earth.

Following in the footsteps of Rachel Carson (1950s editor-in-chief of all publications for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and in 1962 author of *Silent Spring*), environmentally aware landscapers and home gardeners have fostered practices that avoided the use of synthetic chemical pesticides. A natural sequel to Carson's position was one vigorously promoted by Lorrie Otto, a founding member of Wild Ones, Natural Landscapers (1979). Wild Ones eschews lawns and "promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities."

What constitutes a North American 'native plant' is typically loosely tied to an historic era—prior to European settlement and the importation of plants from other parts of the world. A rigorous definition of a 'native plant' addresses the role the plant plays in its environment: "A plant that is considered native to a given geographical area is one that has a supporting role in the ecosystem it occupies—a function in sustaining the web of life that provides ecosystem services that, all told, make this planet habitable by humans. It is a plant that has co-evolved over some period of time with a diversity of surrounding organisms, both in the soil and above ground, so the plants and organisms have become mutually supportive" (Whitman, 2011). When we plant native plants, we recognize that conditions in the area have changed over time, and may not be exactly reproducible, but we try nonetheless, understanding that, in effect, we are slowing down time, that has been sped up and truncated in this world that we are unraveling. We are creating areas to sustain a diversity of life, hoping to give it time to adapt to a changing world.

It is not that what grew here in pre-settlement times, in and of itself, is the goal, but rather to sustain the role these plants performed—their function in the larger scheme. A native plant is one that is integrated into a complex ecosystem that has evolved to support a diversity of life. That is why it is important. That is why a native plant is valuable. Moreover, that is why, when one is displaced by an invasive alien, it is more than mere "change", as has been suggested, it's potentially a matter of life and death.

In *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants sustain Wildlife*

in our Gardens, Douglas Tallamy (2007), an entomologist, provides a compelling illustration of how choices we make as gardeners affect the biodiversity of life in our yards, from insects that feed on the plants to the diverse biota that feeds on the insects.

Adelman and Schwartz's book, *The Midwestern Native Gardener* follows in this same tack, but goes a step further. It is a rare book, one that systematically, season by season, suggests native plants to replace the exotic plants we are accustomed to planting in our Midwestern gardens.

Most of the exotics addressed are plants that have been shown to have 'jumped the garden fence' and are now invasive in surrounding natural areas, supplanting the native plants that might otherwise be growing there.

In the 'Nature Notes' that follow each listing of native plants are mentioned pollinators and herbivores that are especially served by these natives.

While one might quibble about some of the exotic plants chosen for replacement, and some of the natives listed as potential replacements, the book serves a much broader role. It alerts the reader to the natives' unique roles in attracting and sustaining increased biodiversity in our gardens. To the uninitiated gardener, the native plant novice, the book provides essential lists of plant names with which to become familiar.

It has been pointed out that many gardeners are not entirely familiar with the names of the exotics they plant. In that case, the book serves the purpose of familiarizing gardeners with the names and the attributes of the 'pretty plants' in their gardens, and lists the plants they might consider growing instead. Conversely, the initiated gardener or restorationist, already familiar with exotic alien plants that need replacement, will find this resource arms them with information to share with anyone who will listen.

This book belongs on the reference shelves of all plants of all plants people. 🐞



Native flowers in a home landscape.



Wild Ones Ann Arbor (MI) Chapter participated in a Fourth of July Parade. Carrie Sonen and Julia Sonen accompany Dad, Kurt Sonen.

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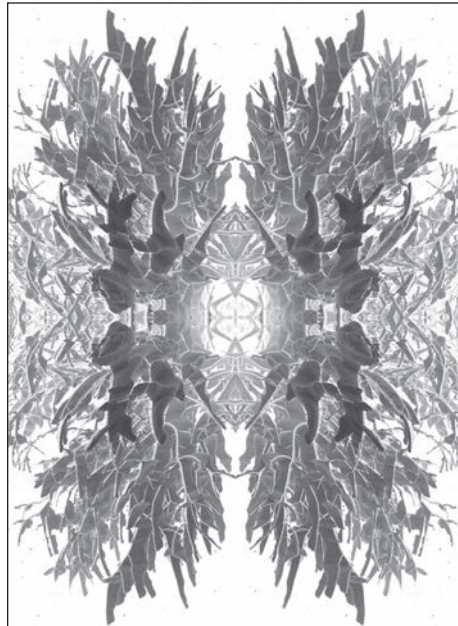
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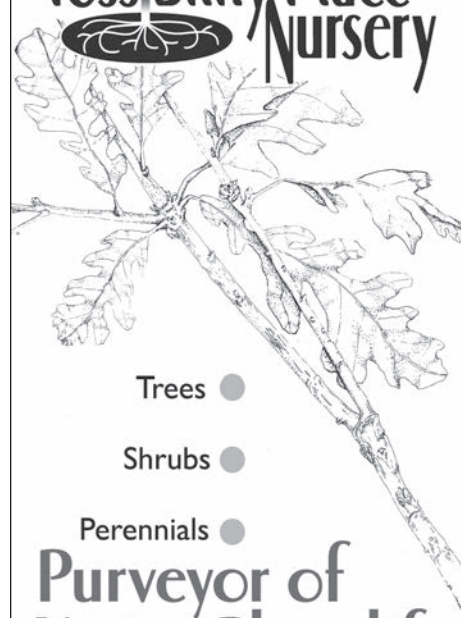
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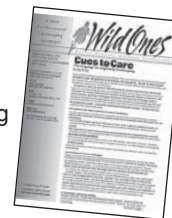
🐦 **October 15, 2012 – SFE Grant Application due date.** For more information go to <http://www.wildones.org/seedmony.html> or e-mail SFEDirector@wildones.org.

🐦 **October 31, 2012 – Last day to vote for People's Choice award for the 2012 Wild Ones Photo Contest.**

🐦 **November 10, 2012 – The fourth 2012 Wild Ones national Quarterly Board Meeting** will be held via webconference at 9AM CST. The subject of the meeting will be general operations. Contact the headquarters office for more details at info@wildones.org.

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