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for the natural
landscaping
movement



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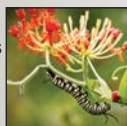
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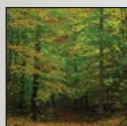
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Working toward our next
30 years restoring native plants
and natural landscapes.

Milkweeds: Not Just for Monarchs

By Brianna Borders and Matthew Shepherd

Supporting populations of pollinators is important. We frequently hear that "every third mouthful of food comes from pollinators".



Photo credit John Meyland



Photo credit Alleyn Unversaw

Standing in a field of milkweed plants, John Anderson watches a monarch butterfly search for a place to lay her eggs. This sight epitomizes most people's image of milkweed: food for monarch caterpillars. This, however, is no ordinary field of milkweed, and John is not most people. The co-owner of Hedgerow Farms near Winters, California, John is at the forefront of a movement to encourage the use of locally native milkweed in restoration projects. As the obligate host plants for monarch caterpillars, milkweeds play a vital role in the life cycle of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). They also provide food or shelter for a diverse array of other insects, including nectar-seeking bees, flies, and butterflies, and such specialist herbivores as seed bugs, longhorn beetles, and leaf beetles. Native milkweeds are clearly worthy of wider adoption.

More than a hundred species of milkweeds (*Asclepias*) are native to North America and they can be found in deserts, plains, valleys, foothills, open woods, and wetlands. Milkweeds also grow in disturbed environments including agricultural areas, livestock pastures, ditches, and roadsides; indeed, in some areas, these marginal habitats are the only places where milkweed is regularly seen.

Milkweed is named for its milky latex sap, which oozes from damaged leaves and stems. This sap contains alkaloids and cardenolides, complex chemicals that make the plants toxic to animals. If eaten by livestock, milkweed typically causes depression or diarrhea, and can be fatal. Fortunately, milkweed is bitter in flavor and unpalatable, and range animals will generally avoid eating it if sufficient forage is available. Most milkweed poisoning results from hungry animals being concentrated in areas where milkweed is abundant.

The toxin-laden sap deters mammals, but insects have an amazing capacity to overcome the chemical defenses of plants, particularly those with which they have a shared evolution. In fact, a large number of insects eat milkweeds, often harvesting the toxins for use in their own defense. Of the insects that do this, monarchs are the best known. Their caterpillars sequester the toxins and store them in their tissues, giving

Members Speaking as One



Here's something interesting. Do you know that we have 39 memberships that have been members for over 33 years? These folks are the early members who joined shortly after Wild Ones became established. We have added a new category in our Legacy Program just for them called the Hickory Circle. There are an additional 73 households who have

been members for 15 years or more who are in our Oak Savanna Circle. Not only do we have these long-time members, we have many lifetime members and others who have left bequests as a lasting Legacy memorial.

Most of the Hickory Circle members are from the Milwaukee area where Wild Ones got started. I talked to three of them on the telephone: Margo Fuchs, Rae Sweet and Lucy Schumann. They told me they started a "gardening club" for the fun of gardening—with a focus on native plants. Like many of us, they joined to learn more about natives and because they believed in what Wild Ones was doing. I suppose many in this group have stayed as members out of loyalty, and they continue their memberships because it is a way to stay connected to other people who believe in the benefits of native landscaping. They also continue their memberships to provide support so that others can learn about native plants, and can be inspired to grow native plants in their yards.

When we spoke I asked each of the ladies if they ever imagined that Wild Ones would be as big as it is now. They said that they did not, but know that Lorrie Otto, on whose

philosophy the Wild Ones organization was founded, did. We currently have 3400 members and it appears we could easily increase that number to 3800 by year's end.

Think of it—we are 3400 households, educators, professionals, organizations and businesses supporting one goal—to use native plants as a way to reduce water usage in the landscape, and as a means of making our yards healthy habitats—native plants that can remain strong without pesticide use.

We value and appreciate our founding members, and we are continually grateful to members who support the organization monetarily, but always keep in mind that all Wild Ones members share one common goal. We are all spreading the word that there is a better way to landscape, regardless of our membership years or level. 🌿

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

Editor's Note: To see the Legacy Program in its entirety, go to <http://www.wildones.org/legacy>

Annual Meeting / Chapter Workshops Announcement

The Wild Ones national Board has recommended that the Annual Membership Meeting and Chapter Workshops again be held at the WILD Center in Neenah, Wisconsin. Mark your calendars for August 16, 17 and 18 and plan to join us for some good spirited discussion, some great Wisconsin food and lots of fun.

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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Mark Newstrom and **Michelle Cook** created their Wildlife Habitat in Minneapolis MN and are new members of Wild Ones.

Update on WILD Center

Wild Ones is delighted to have been invited to participate in this year's **Fox Cities Book Festival** to be held April 17-24. We will be welcoming several authors to the WILD Center, while at the same time hosting Dr. Doug Tallamy, **Bringing Nature Home**, through a generous grant provided by Wisconsin Energy Corporation Foundation, and Charlotte Adelman, **The Midwestern Native Garden**. The festival's featured author will be Richard Louv, **Last Child in the Woods**, and **The Nature Principle**, who will be making six appearances throughout the week.

We are also hosting on Jan. 26th the first **Fox Valley Eagle Days** at the WILD Center, along with 10 other venues.

Wild Ones Executive Director Donna VanBuecken and Fox Valley Area Chapter member Dave Edwards took advantage of the several snowfalls this winter and overseeded the newly planted prairie at the WILD Center. Note the trusty John Deere tractor donated by Marilyn Jones of the Twin Cities Chapter. It sure came in handy for watering the oak saplings during this past summer's drought.



Photo Credit Jack Bartholmai



Annual Appeal & Tax Deductibility

Wild Ones makes one annual funding appeal each year during the "tax season." Many of you take advantage of this opportunity to not only gain helpful deductions toward your income tax reporting, but also simply to support Wild Ones. We thank you very much for making that donation and we also encourage you to think of Wild Ones generously when deciding what your donations will be.

Because Wild Ones Natural Landscapers Ltd aka as Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes and as Wild Ones is a 501(c)(3) IRS certified environmental organization, that means all your donations and membership fees are wholly tax deductible if you use itemized tax deductions on your income tax report. Because we carefully select and offer premiums that fall within the value allowed by law, you need not be concerned with their value in figuring your deductions. Except for Wild Store (merchandise) purchases, the full amount of your payment to Wild Ones for donations and membership fees is considered a deductible contribution.

As outlined in President Tim Lewis' annual appeal letter, during the past year, your donations went toward growing Wild Ones into a stronger organization. From increasing our membership to nearing 3,500 to moving publication of the Journal and the website in-house, your continued support has helped not only Wild Ones grow, but also the natural landscaping movement grow. This year through the challenge donations being offered by several Wild Ones chapters and your generous matching donations, we will be able to continue that growth. **4,000 members is the goal!**

NEWS FLASH: A significant tax benefit available to charitably-minded individuals age 70½ or older expired at the end of 2011, but the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 enacted on January 2, 2013 reinstated it retroactively for 2012 and prospectively for all of 2013. This provision allows you to contribute IRA funds directly to qualifying public charities. See your tax accountant for specific details. 🐿

Native Seeds in the Classroom

By Dan Schutte

The author's project "North Shore Community School Rain Garden and Swale Planting" was awarded a SFE Grant in 2008.

For years, it's been the million dollar question in environmentally-conscious and innovative classrooms around the country: How can we incorporate gardening activities with our students when no one is at the school in the summer? Watering, weeding, harvesting – it all takes time and energy at a time when our enthusiastic would-be school gardeners are enjoying their summer off. While this may be true for vegetable gardening, why not consider using native plants and seeds as an engaging and interactive topic as your integrating context for all sorts of curriculum topics?

When students come back to school in the fall, it's the perfect time to find, identify, and explore native wildflowers in your area. Many are in full bloom at the end of August and create an excellent platform for studying plant parts, seed shape and movement, and different types of animals that use these blooming beauties as a their food, water, shelter, and space. Native wildflowers could also be a perfect theme used to discuss social studies concepts such as community members interacting and sharing resources.

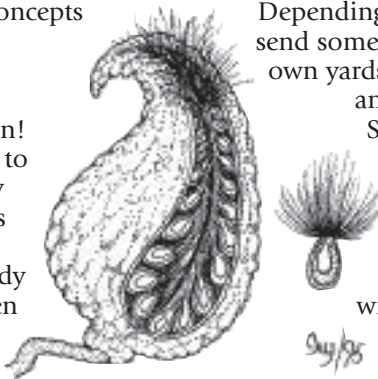
No native plant gardens at your school? Another opportunity for classroom innovation! Bring a few native flowers into the classroom to discuss, show your students and have a lovely wildflower bouquet in your room. As flowers dry and begin to produce seeds, collect and label them in small containers for kids to study during morning choice time. This will happen in late September and early October, and by late November, your students can help you mix some damp vermiculite and bag the seeds for winter stratification. Before you do this, take your students outside when it is cold, and preferably snowy! Have them pretend they are seeds clinging to a plant, being blown loose by a strong gust of wind, swirling through the air, and finally, falling to the ground. Now have them imagine

what it's like for seeds in the winter? Warm? Cold? Dry? Wet? It won't take long for them to discover that seeds will be cold and wet in the winter, and you can pipe in with the fact that seeds need to be cold and wet. That's why we stratify!

In just a few short months, you'll be ready to germinate seeds in your classroom. A few simple planting trays, humidity domes, and some soil and you'll have little plants growing in no time to use for making daily observations, studying similarities and differences, measuring weekly growth, and learning about plant growth and development. As plants grow, students can help you harden them off, carrying them outside in the morning and back to the classroom in the afternoon. Soon, your plants will be ready for the "real world" and your class can find a place on the school property to start their very own native flower or butterfly garden. A perfect end-of-the-year activity after tests are over and students are itching to get outside.

Depending on how big your project gets, you may even send some plants home with students to plant in their own yards or gardens. This year each student, teacher, and staff member at North Shore Community School will be taking home a swamp milkweed plant propagated by 1st graders studying insects. We hope these will become living laboratories for summer monarch butterfly observations!

So native plant gardening works great within the school calendar – from fall to spring, there are activities that can be done with students and the culmination of having their own plant to grow and tend over the summer is a great way to carry the project through into the next fall. It won't take long to start noticing the animals, insects, and wildlife attracted to your plants, and this is just the beginning of an endless list of educational projects that can be tied in to your native plant project. 🌱



Search now and raise a penny!

Every time you search the Internet, you can help Wild Ones. Instead of using Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc., just use the search engine www.goodsearch.com. For each search done by our members, Wild Ones receives a penny. While that may not seem like much, it does add up.

If 1000 people do two searches a day, Wild Ones would receive \$7,300 a year.

It costs you nothing to sign-up and to use this service, but you will contribute to Wild Ones and its mission. GoodSearch is powered by Yahoo, so you will still get great results in your searches.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com (there is a direct link on wildones.org) and enter Wild Ones when asked "who do you want to help?" Click on the Wild Ones Natural Landscapers Ltd, Appleton, WI and then create a GoodSearch account using only your name and e-mail address or use your Facebook login if you prefer. If you click the button to "stay logged in" you will automatically be set up to give back to Wild Ones every time you go to www.goodsearch.com. Ask your family and friends to use this great website and see the results multiply.

If you would like to contribute even more, you can shop online through GoodSearch and Wild ones will receive a percentage of your total. Stores like Barnes & Noble, Kohl's, Target, Staples, are all listed and will donate to Wild Ones.



Milkweed comes to school

by Dorothy Boyer

This is an excellent experience for the children. Not only are they learning about the butterflies, they are also learning about germination and growth habits of the milkweed on which the butterflies feed.



In an effort to support Monarch butterflies, four volunteers from Dunwiddie Elementary School in Port Washington, Wisconsin were selected to collect Common Milkweed pods from the half acre prairie site in front of their school in October.

Each child was given a plastic flat filled with potting soil. They sprinkled the seeds from one Milkweed pod on the top of their flat and covered the seeds with a small amount of potting soil to hold the seeds in place.

The flats were then taken to the school's enclosed courtyard. Because the courtyard is not accessible to wildlife, there was no need to cover the flats with mesh. In that setting the seeds were able to go through the seasonal cold temperatures and moisture required for germination: three months around 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

In April the flats were brought in and put under grow lights (cool fluorescent bulbs). A timer ensured 15 hours of light per day.

Germination was quite remarkable! When the seedlings had three true leaves, the children potted them into six-ounce no-wax paper cups. The cups had five holes punched into the bottom with a pencil.

Since Common Milkweed seedlings do not like to have their roots disturbed, the cups were planted just below the soil surface to avoid drying out. The cups eventually decomposed, allowing the root system to develop.

The seedlings were destined to be planted around the Monarch Trail located in the Milwaukee County grounds in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. The site has been used by Monarchs during their annual migration for a very long time as evidenced by the ancient tree which is growing in a sheltered area. The Monarchs roost in the tree, are warmed by the rising sun and nectar on nearby native plants.

This site is one of four known Monarch roosting sites in eastern Wisconsin and is threatened by proposed construction of 192 apartments to the east. The site is already bordered on the west by Highway 45 and on the south by four-lane Watertown Plank Road. A large open area is located to the north. Supporters hope that this area can be developed into habitat which will support the Monarchs.

Barb Agnew has spearheaded multiple efforts to preserve the annual roosting site. You can find out more about the Monarch Trail and her preservation efforts at <http://www.themonarchtrail.org/>.

The children were proud to have participated in efforts to support the Monarch Butterflies. 🦋

Welcome Honorary Directors

We are pleased to welcome a new Honorary Director to the Wild Ones family from Cape May Court House, NJ. Pat Sutton, author of several books on birds and butterflies, and frequent contributor to a blog titled Native Plants and Wildlife Gardens, will serve a four-year term ending in 2017. She has an A.A. from Green Mountain College, Poultney, VT; a B.A. from State University of New York at Oneonta; and a M.A. from Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ in Environmental Education. She is a professional writer, a lecturer, a naturalist and a biologist as well as being self-employed. For more information about Pat, please go to <http://www.wildones.org/contacts.html>

Other Honorary Directors extending their terms to 2017 include Thomas Barnes, Professor and Wildlife Extension Specialist, Author and Photographer from Lexington, KY; Bob Grese, Professor and Arboretum Director from Ann Arbor, MI; Lynn Steiner, Editor, Author and Photographer from Stillwater, MN; and Doug Tallamy, Professor and Chair, Behavioral Ecologist and Author from Newark, DE. For complete information about these and the other five Honorary Directors, go to <http://www.wildones.org/contacts.html> Bottom of page. 🦋

Are We Certifiable? Musings on Creating a Backyard Habitat

By Mark Newstrom and Michelle Cook

This article covers the four needs of a wildlife habitat: food sources, water sources, cover and breeding spaces. Ideas put forth herein only illustrate what we have done in our own unique situation. We hope that readers are encouraged to create their own habitats that all creatures great and small can enjoy. In the interests of fairness and balance (and marital harmony!), Michelle and Mark will alternate entries.

MARK: When Michelle and I were married in August, 2010, I moved all the way across Minnesota's Twin Cities, from my condominium to her house. The former overlooks the Minnesota River valley southeast of Saint Paul; the latter overlooks Dutch Lake in the Minneapolis far western suburb of Mound. The former has a view of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge; a scene difficult to leave. The latter, however, has something I never had before as an adult: a yard.

MICHELLE: I had lived in this house for nearly 20 years before Mark moved in. In that time I had never applied chemicals to the lawn, no chemicals to remove weeds anywhere on the property, and no lawn seeding. I had maintained vegetable and herb gardens in the backyard for some years, but those had gone wild by the time we met. The property is about an acre total, a third of which is wooded, and which I have always left untouched. All of this was deliberate, as keeping the land natural and safe for wildlife has always been extremely important to me. Except for a few hostas, clematis and snow-on-the-mountain along the driveway and against the house, the entire property was pretty much in its natural state...a good place to start!

MARK: Michelle noted that the backyard could become certified through the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) as wildlife habitat. It would take a little bit of work, a little bit of money and a whole lot of reminding ourselves of our impact. We went to the NWF web site and found out the needed features for certification. Developing these features has taken time but has been most enjoyable. As an added benefit, I also get much more exercise than before, from pulling pond algae to push-mowing the "lawn" (of which most is not grass).



MICHELLE: What we've achieved in the last two years has been to install a rain garden in the front of the property bordering the street, and a water-centered habitat in the back, surrounded by as many native plants as possible. In the rain garden we planted ostrich and cinnamon Ferns, silky and red osier dogwoods, american elderberry, wild plum and columbine. Around the water feature (a pond roughly 8' x 15', with a stream meandering an additional 18' and dropping via several waterfalls) we planted more dogwoods, serviceberry, various evergreen shrubs, chokecherry and a couple of native honeysuckle vines. Also in both locations we planted cardinal flower, milkweed, goatsbeard, phlox and coneflower. We've propagated Joe-pye weed, fall asters and Jack-in-the-pulpit, all found already flourishing in and around the wooded area of the property. A honey locust found its way naturally to the pond border. Aquatic plants include cattails and common arrowhead. I had looked into the possibility of adding submerged plants to help control algae, but ultimately found they are all considered invasive (and most weren't native), so that idea was abandoned.

Food sources

MICHELLE: Although nature does provide a bounty, supplementing this food supply can make for many joyous days of wildlife watching, as well as an added source for animals struggling with a hard winter, a difficult migration, or even overall habitat loss.

Bird feeders were in place before Mark moved in, but we expanded on those in terms of location and variety. Other areas are untouched, leaving places for butterflies, fireflies, deer and other interesting critters to survive and thrive. Berry and fruit bearing plants, as well as nectar-producing flowers, also supplement what the forest provides.

Water sources

MARK: For us, this has been the largest addition to the backyard habitat, and certainly grander than we first anticipated. The combination waterfall and pond provides: habitat for swimming fish and frogs, blooming lilies and bathing birds; water for any living thing (including Olivia, the family dog); a source of sanctuary for us. Surrounding the water feature with native flowering and berry-bearing plants was a must. The local nursery was a wealth of information and assets. The contours of our yard, all eventually descending towards Dutch Lake, did provide a challenge to the pond designer. Working with what the landscape offered did minimize the impact.

No chemicals are used in maintaining the pond. We add bacteria from time to time to help maintain pond health, but all algae control is done with the use of shade, proper filtration and a little elbow grease.

We also use a "plain old-fashioned" pedestal-mounted birdbath, which is not kept open in winter. For anyone wanting a small year-round water source, a small birdbath heater can be installed.

Cover

MICHELLE: Although our yard has already been blessed with abundant older trees, lower cover (except for buckthorn, which has made an unwelcome appearance in recent years) has been somewhat lacking. Based on this, we made an effort to include shrubs and smaller trees in the new habitats we were creating. Specifically, we've added dogwoods, fruit-bearing shrubs such as elderberry and chokecherry, and low-growing evergreen shrubs.

Breeding spaces

MARK: The older trees (mostly red oak) provide excellent areas for animals preferring to be off the ground, and the undisturbed areas below the trees give excellent cover to

those preferring the ground or below. We've supplied numerous bird houses in varying sizes to entice breeding birds (or squirrels) as well as bat houses. Having a location with many established trees means we also have a good selection of woodpecker-provided-cavities for cavity-nesters as well. Dead trees are only removed if deemed a threat to fall on our house; all downed branches and twigs are added to various brush piles throughout the less-used parts of the lot.



Conclusion

MICHELLE: The fruits of our labors have been evident virtually from the start. Within weeks of installing the pond we had resident frogs of several species. pileated woodpeckers and Coopers hawks, raccoons and deer were witnessed stepping in to take a sip not long after the pond was in place. In less than two months we had a warbler fallout (when groups of birds migrating together stop for a rest), which provided us with close views of Canada, Tennessee, Nashville, Orange-crowned and Common Yellowthroat warblers, all enjoying a cool drink, a rest and a bath in our backyard.

This summer we've enjoyed the company of a host of butterflies, and the variety of visiting birds continues to grow. Having a natural yard has been nothing less than a joyous experience for us, and one we would highly recommend to anyone!

And, by the way, we are certified... Our property is now recognized by the National Wildlife Federation as not only a Certified Wildlife Habitat, but also an Advanced Bird-Friendly Habitat as well.

MARK: Bird-Friendly Habitat for National Wildlife Federation consists of nine items: keeping year-round open water; installing native plants; removing invasive plants; eliminating insecticides; keeping dead trees; brush piles; offering food in feeders; maintaining nest boxes; reducing lawn area. 🐾

Planning for Spring? Go Wild for Monarchs!

By Denise Gehring

When planning your native gardens, outreach events, plant sales, and chapter programs, broaden your impact and interest this year with a monarch conservation focus using the new Wild Ones, **Wild for Monarchs** resources.

With help from our national partners, Monarch Joint Venture and Monarch Watch-Bring Back the Monarchs, the Wild Ones Monarch Committee has developed and obtained materials for our members, chapters and public to learn more about recent survival challenges of monarch butterflies.

Wild Ones Monarch resources now include: a PowerPoint presentation ready for chapter meetings and public programs, a native plant Monarch Waystation handout that can be regionally adapted including a suggestions for favorite nectar plants, educational activities and information links, milkweed collecting and growing guidelines, photo gallery, outreach giveaways such as Wild Ones monarch coloring sheets, milkweed bookmarks and more from our monarch partners. The national Wild Ones office is coordinating the distribution to chapters and PAL members.

Appreciation goes to the Wild Ones Monarch Committee members and advisors for sharing their expertise and time in preparing and coordinating these efforts. Committee members and their chapters are: **Co-chairs:** Denise Gehring, Oak Openings Region (OH) and Pam Wolfe, Lake-to-Prairie (IL); **Native Waystations:** Henrica Regez-PAL/ Rock River Valley Chapter and Trish Hacker Hennig- Northern Oakland; **Chapter Resources:** Janet Allen-Habitat Gardening (NY) and Sandy Miller-Lake-to-Prairie (IL); **Milkweed Growing:** Hal Mann-Oak Openings Region (OH), Judy Kesser- Milwaukee SW Wehr, and Diane Olsen Schmidt-Menomonee River Area (WI); Education and Outreach: Candy Sarikonda-Oak Openings Region (OH)/Monarch Watch, and Cynthia Nelson-Rock River Valley (IL); **Communications:** Jamie Fuerst-WO staff/Fox Valley Area (WI), Maryann Whitman-Journal Editor (MI), Joan Rudolph-WO staff/Fox Valley Area (WI); **Committee Advisors:** Donna Van Buecken- Wild Ones Executive Director, and Priya Shahani-Coordinator of Monarch Joint Venture.

We as Wild Ones members can lend a hand by improving monarch habitats, growing more milkweeds, giving away milkweed plugs, collecting milkweed seeds this fall, and planting native butterfly waystations. By sharing the story of the monarchs, our Wild Ones outreach and leadership efforts for growing native plants are increasingly embraced by the public and project partners. There is growing excitement as we become Wild for Monarchs!

If you have interest in becoming part of a continuing Wild Ones Monarch Committee, or would like to submit monarch resources (e.g., photos of Waystations, children's activities, nectar plants), for the new Wild Ones website please email monarch@wildones.org. To find out more about Wild For Monarchs, go to www.wildones.org/land/monarch/ 🐾

2013 Wild Ones Database Clean-up

Let's make 2013 more organized and efficient. Wild Ones would like to get your information up-to-date and accurate. If you have changed your e-mail address or don't have one on file with us, please send an e-mail to admin@wildones.org. Having your e-mail on the database gives you access to the Members Only webpages. You can then read every Journal every printed, keep track of your membership data, read the New Member Handbook, vote in the Wild Ones Photo Contest each year among other important items. E-mail is the least expensive way for us to communicate with each other and it saves paper!

them a bitter taste. They have boldly colorful warning—aposematic—markings, which serve as a reminder to birds and other predators. Other milkweed-feeding insects, including milkweed bugs, milkweed longhorn beetles, and milkweed leaf beetles, sequester and store the milkweeds' toxic chemicals to aid their own defense. Like monarch caterpillars, they generally have aposematic markings.

Large milkweed bugs (*Oncopeltus* spp.) feed only on milkweeds and closely related plants. Although these bugs will feed on young leaves, flowers, and developing pods, a seed diet provides for optimal growth and reproduction. For this reason adults lay their eggs close to developing pods. Small milkweed bugs (*Lygaeus* spp.) feed on seeds as nymphs, but they can develop on plants other than milkweeds. As adults, they are not strictly herbivorous, and will scavenge insects trapped in milkweed flowers, feed on monarch butterfly pupae, and even engage in cannibalism.

Milkweed longhorn beetles (*Tetraopes* spp.), so-named for their prominent antennae, feed exclusively on milkweeds and close relatives. They are generally host-specific—there are thirteen species of milkweed longhorn beetles in the United States and each prefers a different species of milkweed.

The milkweed leaf beetle (*Labidomera clivicollis*) overcomes milkweed's defenses by biting through veins of the leaf. The sap drains from the outer part, and the beetle can feed in relative safety on the drained area beyond the cuts.

The relationship between milkweeds and insects is not one-sided. Milkweeds are entomophilous, meaning that they depend on insects for their pollination. Milkweed pollen does not occur as free grains, but instead is contained in pairs of waxy sacs—pollinia—that are located within vertical grooves on the flowers, called stigmatic slits. Each pollinium contains several hundred grains of pollen. An insect that visits a flower to obtain nectar may leave with a pair of pollinia affixed to its body. This is the result of coming into contact with a corpusculum, a pollinia-bearing gland located at the top of a stigmatic slit. (Insects may accumulate strings of corpuscula and pollinia from repeated

flower visits. In Robert Woodson's extensive monograph on the *Asclepias* species of North America, he reported an instance of a single honey bee carrying forty-five corpuscula!) Pollinia most commonly become attached to an insect's legs but they can also be borne on the mouthparts or on any barbed or hairy surface of an insect's body. Fertilization occurs when pollinia are transferred by the insect into the stigmatic slits of another milkweed flower.

Although milkweeds have a very specialized pollination mechanism, they do not require specialist insects to activate it. Any insect that is large enough to remove and transport pollinia can be an effective pollinator, and milkweeds are pollinated by a broad range of bees, wasps, butterflies, flies, and beetles, even true bugs. A review of milkweed pollination studies completed by Jeff Ollerton and Sigrid Leide revealed that whorled milkweed (*A. verticillata*) has 126 documented pollinators.

With their pollen enclosed within pollinia and inaccessible, milkweeds have only nectar with which to reward visitors. Even so, they attract a tremendous variety of insects with the abundant, high-quality nectar that is readily accessible in the hoods of their flowers. Many of the nectar-seeking insects inadvertently end up as pollinators, while others bring benefits in other ways. In a recent

Some butterflies spend the winter months in tree groves along the coast of California, the only U. S. state with large numbers of overwintering monarchs.

study by David James of Washington State University, milkweed—in this case, showy milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*)—attracted the highest number of beneficial insects of any of the forty-three species of native flowers being studied.

Adult insects that visit milkweeds for nectar include ichneumon, braconid, and mymarid wasps -- all of which are parasitoids (meaning that they lay eggs on or in a host insect. Once hatched, the offspring consume

the host.). The closely related ichneumon and braconid wasps typically parasitize aphids or the soft-bodied larvae of such insects as butterflies, flies, and beetles, while mymarid wasps parasitize insect eggs. Syrphid flies are also attracted to milkweeds. The adults drink the nectar and their highly mobile larvae prey directly on aphids. All are natural predators of crop or garden pests.

One conspicuous insect that can frequently be seen nectaring on milkweed in California and the desert Southwest is the tarantula hawk wasp (*Pepsis* spp.). As their name suggests, these wasps hunt tarantulas, not for themselves—as adults they eat only nectar—but to supply the nests of their offspring.

Like many native plant species, milkweed populations are being lost at a rapid rate due to urban and suburban development and agricultural intensification. Despite their native status, unique beauty, and value to the monarch butterfly as well as to a tremendous range of pollinators and other beneficial insects, milkweeds are often perceived as crop weeds or a threat to livestock and eradicated from agricultural areas, rangelands, and roadsides.

Loss of milkweeds is believed to be one of the factors (along with disturbance to and destruction of overwintering sites) that have led to the steep decline of the western population of monarchs. The butterflies spend the winter months in tree groves along the coast of California, the only U. S. state with large numbers of overwintering monarchs. Each spring, the butterflies leave the groves in search of milkweed on which to lay their eggs. Over the summer, successive generations spread out across North America west and south of the Rocky Mountains and as far north as British Columbia, with the last generation making the journey back to the California coast. Unfortunately, western monarchs are in trouble. Data collected by volunteers show that the number of overwintering monarchs has dropped by more than 90 percent since 1997.

In 2008 the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (a treaty organization of the United States, Canada, and Mexico) published the North American Monarch Conservation Plan, addressing the

steady decline of the butterflies across their native range since population monitoring first began in 1976. Because of their migratory life cycle (breeding in the United States and Canada; overwintering in California and Mexico), the most effective conservation strategies for monarchs are those that protect and restore habitat across their entire range. The plan cites broad national declines in milkweeds and recommends the planting of regionally appropriate native milkweed species to offset the loss and degradation of monarch breeding habitat.

Unfortunately, few commercial sources of native milkweed seed currently exist across the monarch's spring breeding range in the United States—California, Florida, Texas and the rest of the Southwest. In these places, either no milkweeds are planted or those that are planted are species from outside of the region. Clearly, there is a need for sources of locally native milkweed seed. In 2010, with support from the Monarch Joint Venture (MJV) and a Conservation Innovation Grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Xerces Society launched a multistate initiative to increase the availability of native milkweed seed for monarch habitat conservation efforts. Xerces is working with the native seed industry to develop new sources of regionally appropriate native milkweed seed, and working with the NRCS to incorporate milkweeds into the agency's pollinator habitat restoration projects.

As part of this effort, John Anderson has already produced seventy pounds of seed from narrow-leaved milkweed (*A. fascicularis*), which can be used for restoration across California. We hope that this is just the first batch of milkweed seed that will be planted to help stem the downward spiral of monarch butterflies, while at the same time sustaining the richness of insects required for a healthy environment. 🐦

This article was reprinted, with permission, from the spring 2011 issue of *Wings. Essays on Invertebrate Conservation*, published by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, www.xerces.org.

A Mid-Winter Day's Dream

By Mike DuMez

It's early January, and as holiday cheers fade with the old year, my thoughts already envision changes and pleasures in store for the new one. Almost thirty years ago, thanks largely to Wild Ones, I began to naturalize our half-acre village property of mostly lawn and a few scattered clumps of white ash. Today it holds two small ponds, a patch of prairie, a scruffy meadow and a manageable woodland that sparkles by summer's end with over sixty native wildflower species. Added tree and shrub companions frame the scene. The beauty, enjoyment, and environmental assets that they all provide are gifts that keep on giving far longer than most Christmas presents ever can.

Although the splendor of mid-May is still well off, its anticipation helps sooth the bite of winter winds. On rare "January thaw" days there are short-lived puddles that later will help stiffen prairie, white, and nodding trillium blossoms along a wood chip trail. Maple tree buds are still tight, but by March they will burst into auburn epaulets overhead to complement brown skunk cabbage blooms below. It is no small miracle that under the woodland glaze of snow there are bluebell "tips" planning to morph from lavender buttons into powder blue thimbles, trout lily "spears" poised to appear as camouflage uniforms under yellow trumpets, bloodroot "hands" waiting to unclasp their hold on single white stars, and Dutchman's breeches' "kernels" all set to pop into laundry lines of tiny, puffy pants. Meanwhile, Jacks-in-the-pulpit are preparing silent sermons for Jacob's ladders, Solomon's seals, and the rest of the congregation when they arrive later.

Embedded with all these coming attractions are seeds and roots of wild geranium, ginger, and leek, shooting star, mayapple, baneberry, bur cucumber, violet, cohosh, and meadow rue, all frozen stiff right now, but still capable of becoming a diversity of colors, textures, shapes and uses in a few fort-nights when conditions become optimal. They appear to be dead to the world in January, but they will testify that life after death does exist when they reveal their inner designs before June. With each passing day all these memories approach reality as winter softens and shadows shorten.

Winter thoughts include more than flowers, however. Scattered bumps under the snow expose the homes of fern fiddleheads marking time before they join the parade. Pesky Norway maple seeds relish the day when they will sprout and try to take over, only to be plucked in favor of truly native residents. And somehow wood frogs with natural anti-freeze endure in clammy mud, while lady bugs survive under blankets of leaves, both ready to spring into spring when the time is just right. Dormant eggs and larvae also prove that no winter is harsh enough to interfere with their roles as future foods or plant pollinators in the cycles of life. Whether plant, animal, or human, we all have been gifted with abilities of genuine value to ourselves and to others.

It is a special privilege that we can be observers of this grand panorama of the succession of seasons, and at the same time it is sobering that we can participate in it with our actions. Those actions can be contributions that enhance and perpetuate that which is natural and beautiful, or they can include indifference or even harm to that on which we so much rely. We are in effect the only capable caretakers that the world has. We depend on it and it depends on us. That reality should give us all much to dream about on a winter's day, and even more to act upon each and every day. 🐦

Wild Ones New Website Update

Yes, the new website is still in the works. Currently, a few members are testing the site and giving their input. We will be live by the end of January.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL Wild Ones Photo Contest

Wild Ones is very pleased to announce the 2012 Photo Contest winners. Congratulations! to everyone. We had over 160 entries and all were really excellent quality, so judging for winners was a tough job for nature photographer Noppadol Paothong. This is the second time Nop has judged the contest for us, and we are so delighted he lends his expertise. You can find out more about Nop's work at www.nopnatureimages.com.



Scenery

1st Place and People's Choice - Morning Mist on the Wet Prairie
By Marlene Frisbie, Lake-to-Prairie (IL) Chapter



Flora

First Place Winner - Royal Catchfly By Betty Hall,
Lexington (KY) Chapter



Pollinators

First Place Winner - Beauty & the Beast By Claire Kim,
Lake-to-Prairie (IL) Chapter



Celebrating Monarch

Photo Committee Choice - Monarch Caterpillar on Butterfly
Milkweed By Betty Hall, Lexington (KY) Chapter.



Photo by Kids

First Place Winner - Shaggy Tree (River Birch) By Eric Vastag,
PAL (WI)



Photos of Children
First Place Winner - Looking for Insects By Betty Hall,
 Lexington (KY) Chapter



Residential Landscaping
First Place Winner - Suburban landscape By John Magee,
 PAL (VA)



Non-Residential Landscaping
First Place Winner - Fermi Dock By David Poweleit,
 Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter

Celebrating Monarch

Photo Committee Choice - Monarch Caterpillar on Butterfly Milkweed By Betty Hall, Lexington (KY) Chapter.

Scenery

1st Place and People's Choice - Morning Mist on the Wet Prairie By Marlene Frisbie, Lake-to-Prairie (IL) Chapter

Second Place Winner - Dogwood & Waterfall By Becky Erickson, Mid-Missouri (IL) Chapter

Third Place Winner - Let it be - Prairie Forever! By Peter Dziuk, Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

Photos of Children

First Place Winner - Looking for Insects By Betty Hall, Lexington (KY) Chapter

Second Place Winner - Queen of the Cottonwood By David Poweleit, Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter

Third Place Winner - Exploring the World By Alleen Unversaw, Greater Cincinnati (OH) Chapter

Flora

First Place Winner - Royal Catchfly By Betty Hall, Lexington (KY) Chapter

Second Place Winner - Reflection By Katy Chayka, Twin Cities (MN) Chapter

Third Place Winner - Red Trillium By Kelly Daniels, SE Michigan (MI) Chapter

Pollinators

First Place Winner - Beauty & the Beast By Claire Kim, Lake-to-Prairie (IL) Chapter

Second Place Winner - Common Buckeye Pollinating Conoclinium coelestinum By Mark Plunkett, Greater Cincinnati (OH) Chapter

Third Place Winner - Honeybee on Asclepias tuberosa By Mark Plunkett, Greater Cincinnati (OH) Chapter

Photo by Kids

First Place Winner - Shaggy Tree (River Birch) By Erin Vastag, PAL (WI)

Second Place Winner - Rain Drops on Poppy Mallow By Erin Vastag, PAL (WI)

Third Place Winner - Monarch on Liatris By Erin Vastag, PAL (WI)

Non-Residential Landscaping

First Place Winner - Fermi Dock By David Poweleit, Northern Kane County (IL) Chapter

Second Place Winner - Windswept Live Oaks and Palmettos By Denise Gehring, Oak Openings Region (OH) Chapter

Third Place Winner - Wings and Wheels Museum Native Garden By Tim Lewis, Rock River Valley (IL) Chapter

Residential Landscaping

First Place Winner - Suburban landscape By John Magee, PAL (VA)

Second Place Winner - On the farm By John Magee (VA)

Third Place Winner - Working Toward a Sustainable Suburbia By Alistair Bradley, Columbus (OH) Chapter

To see a slide show of this Photo Contest as well as all past contests, go to the Wild Ones Photo Contest webpage <http://www.wildones.org/members/photo/>. Many of these photos are used throughout Wild Ones promotional materials and especially in the Wild Ones annual calendar. And, don't forget to start planning to take new photos to submit for the 2014 Wild Ones Photo Contest.

Favorite Plants for Winter Interest

By Lois Michel-Perry

Although the author reports observing these plant communities in northern Illinois (Chicago region), it should be noted that these plant associations, in most cases, hold true for the Eastern Broadleaf Forest Ecosystem (Bailey's Province 222).

When choosing a favorite plant for the landscape, I look for one with winter interest. Since winter is six months of our gardening calendar in northern Illinois, it is important to have structure, habitat for wildlife and interest through the dormant as well as the growing season. You can always add other blooming plants later to embellish the palette.

When thinking of local plants with winter interest, the beautiful grasses, staple of our native prairie habitat, first come to mind. They are a great choice for this season with their plume seed heads and wonderful movement in the brisk winter winds. The straw or rust color gives life to the landscape. But since they are often used, I wanted to choose something else.

Indigenous evergreens are limited. The red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), used in making cedar chests, served as our first Christmas trees here. If you'd like to see one try visiting DuPage County Forest Preserve's Kline Creek Farm on County Farm Road in West Chicago in December and take a tour (10 a.m. - 4 p.m.) of the farmhouse. But they are the alternate host to apple rust fungus and are difficult to find on the market. White pine, (*Pinus strobus*) (uplands) also is native to northern Illinois.

The next thing I thought of were other plants with interesting seed pods, often perennials, such as iris, or coneflowers, (*Echinacea pallida*) or (*Ratibida pinnata*), which are striking as well as attractive to birds.

Beautiful bark is not to be overlooked and especially noticeable in the winter, on such a moisture-loving woody plant as river birch, (*Betula nigra*).

I considered that shrubs are often overlooked in the landscape. They grow in woodlands, often on the east side of water courses, or in thickets. These include: buttonbush, (*Cephalanthus*), (grows in moist areas); dogwood, (*Cornus*); witch hazel, (*Hamamelis virginiana*); chokeberry, (*Aronia prunifolia*); rose; sumac and viburnum. Those with edible fruit are: serviceberry, (*Amelanchier*); hazelnut, (*Corylus americana*); wild plum, (*Prunus americana*); elderberry, (*Sambucus canadensis*) and gooseberry, (*Ribes missouriense*).

On a walk to my neighborhood forest preserve the other day, I noticed a group of viburnums which still displayed, in December, berries hanging from their branches. These often overlooked but wonderful plants give structure to the garden in winter; attract wildlife; have four-season interest; are found in the market and are easily grown.

Viburnums, which are in the *Caprifoliaceae* or honeysuckle family, are a better choice than the imported *Lonicera* spp., commonly on the market, which are aggressive spreaders.

Those types which are native to northern Illinois include: nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*) and blackhaw, (*V. prunifolium*). Downy northern arrowwood (*V. rafinesquianum*), a smaller shrub which is also native to our

area, is difficult to find on the market. All grow in moist mesic woodlands throughout Illinois. Nannyberry may also grow in springy areas or along stream banks, and blackhaw likes wooded slopes.

They tend to be large, so you will need to choose the type according to your space. Nannyberry usually gets 10-15 feet tall, but can be up to 25 feet, and blackhaw may reach 25 feet in height.

They have spring-blooming small, white flowers in a large terminal clusters, approximately 2 - 4.5 inches in diameter. Fruit is small and black, arranged in clusters. Blackhaw's is 2/3 inch long, bluish-black, often covered with a waxy bloom.

Nannyberry has somewhat open structure at maturity; stems are slender and brownish in color, slightly pubescent, and it may sucker. Blackhaw has a very rigid form; stems are slender and grayish, usually smooth, short and stiff.

Nannyberry buds are red, nearly smooth, up to 3/4 inches long. The terminal flower bud is often rounded at the base, tapering to a long point, like the head of a long-billed duck. Blackhaw buds don't overlap, are brown, up to 1/2 inch long.

Identification features for all are opposite and simple leaves, oval or nearly elliptical with serrated margins. Their leaves turn a range of rich burgundy color in the fall.

Nannyberry leaves are 2 -4 inches long and half as wide, with finely serrated margins. The apex is distinctly tapered and pointed. The winged petiole is wavy and rolled under and sometimes rusty, hairy. Blackhaw leaves have finely serrated margins, are dark green, smooth and glossy above, and pale and smooth below.

Being aware of plants that usually grow as companions or associates with viburnums in the wild can help in planning a landscape:

Both nannyberry and blackhaw are associated with the Virginia creeper vine.

Nannyberry associates with: white ash; annual bedstraw (cleavers); wild

black currant; grey dogwood; elderberry; American elm; riverbank grape; honeysuckle; Jack-in-the-pulpit; white and swamp white oak; spring beauty; clustered black snakeroot and Virginia waterleaf.

Blackhaw associates with: false rue anemone; bellwort; wild black cherry; choke cherry; fragile fern; wild geranium; elm-leaved goldenrod; wild gooseberry; Jack-in-the-pulpit; wild leek; sugar maple; red oak; early meadow rue; feathery false Solomon's seal; spring beauty; hairy sweet Cicely; Virginia waterleaf and common blue violet. In calcareous springy habitats, it is found with green ash; rough avens; spicebush and skunk cabbage. 🌿



Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)

For this article, excerpts are taken from:

The Morton Arboretum's Woodland Stewardship Training Program, 2011. *Plants of the Chicago Region*, Swink and Wilhelm, Indiana Academy of Science, 1994.

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Chapter website: www.wildones.org/chapters/dupage

BOOK REVIEW

'The Native Landscape Reader' by Robert Grese

Review By Rick Meader

For those special occasions and holidays, you may be looking for an "out of the mainstream" gift for the avid reader, history buff, nature buff or gardener in your family. **The Native Landscape Reader**, by Wild Ones' Honorary Director Robert (Bob) Grese (published by the University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), is a book that has appeal to all of these groups, and this entry is a shameless, unpaid, plug for the book (available at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens gift shop, Amazon and other worthwhile booksellers).

In the course of his previous writings (**Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens**, an introduction to a reprint of a book by Ossian C. Simonds, **Landscape Gardening**, and many articles), numerous talks, and course lectures on landscaping and landscape architects, Bob has accumulated a library of articles and books written through history about gardening and the natural landscape. This book is a compilation of some of these articles.



One of our native landscapes, the Scio Preserve on Scio Church Road - a beautiful place for a restorative walk in the woods

While the names might not be familiar to all, the table of contents shows a veritable "Who's Who" in the history of landscape architecture. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jens Jensen, Andrew Jackson Downing, Horace William Shaler Cleveland, Liberty Hyde Bailey and O.C. Simonds are but a few of the landscape designers with one or more entries included.

They all speak of the importance of seeking inspiration and guidance from nature, and in particular the natural surroundings of a site. By doing this, the designs created and plants used will survive and prosper, and fit with the area.

Most of these articles were written over 70 years ago, and significant development has created much greater separation from truly native habitats through the loss of those habitats to subdivisions, roads and commercial projects. Still, this advice remains valuable in creating a habitat for your own home that is welcoming to you, birds, butterflies, chipmunks and other wildlife that make all of our lives more complete, even if we don't realize it in their absence from the overly neat, sterile landscapes that we've become accustomed to in our modern lives.

Other authors are naturalists, some famous and others relatively obscure. Aldo Leopold, Henry Chandler Cowles, Charles Sprague Sargent, Stephen Sargent Visser and others have articles describing specific habitats and the importance

of natural habitats to other natural habitats, wildlife and mankind as a whole, for inspiration and restoration of the spirit and soul. In the increasingly developed world they lived in (sometimes 100 years ago or more), when there was much more existing native landscape than we have today, even they saw the perils of habitat loss, and the ramifications of that loss.

Still other articles are more descriptive articles by sources not at all scientific or related to landscape design — people like Danske Danbridge, the poet, and Thomas Cole, the famous landscape painter. These articles talk in more general terms about the value and beauty of natural landscapes.

Although I've never been in New England, reading Thomas Cole's description of the forested mountains there took me back to the time he lived, when bears, wolves and other wildlife had homes where there are probably now lakeside cabins or subdivisions in the woods. Articles describing the importance of woods, and descriptions of native habitats and species not solely devoted to their use in landscaping add depth to the book that increase its utility and appeal to a wider audience than just landscapers or gardeners.

A compilation is just a collection of articles unless there is meaningful text to tie them together, summarize the messages taught and extract from them some lessons and inspiration for meaningful living going forward. Bob's easily read and understood writing style make his additions in this regard extremely helpful. They provide some historical context in which the articles were written and add current thought in the context of the current status of our environment.

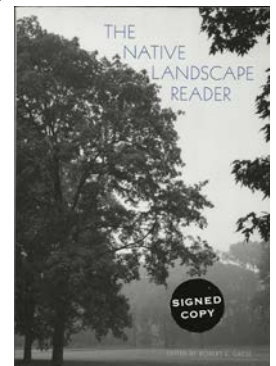
It's amazing (and discouraging) to me in reading this book that they were discussing some of the same issues way back when, that we're facing today, and we don't seem to have learned much from the lessons they taught. At the same time, it's also a great education, written in a wide variety of styles, offered by a litany of teachers with undeniable credentials and acclaim.

Whoever reads this book will come away with a much deeper understanding of the native landscape, why it is so important to man and wildlife, and why it is so important to preserve what we have, restore what we've lost wherever possible, and add elements of native landscapes wherever we can, whether it be to our homes, our commercial or spiritual landscapes, or our parks.

I hope that you'll buy this book, for yourself and your friends, and take the authors' messages to heart. We'll all benefit if we do. 🌿

My personal copy of Bob Grese's book, "The Native Landscape Reader".

Keep your hands off!



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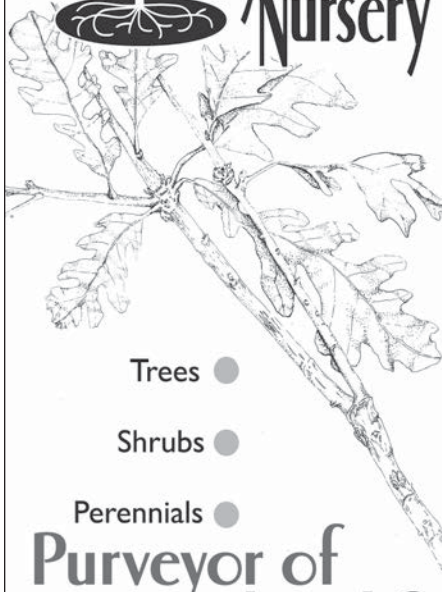
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Mark Your Calendars

January 19. The first quarterly national board meeting for 2013 will be by webconference.

February 16. The national budget discussion and approval will be by webconference.

Jan 26, 2013 (Sat)

17th Annual Toward Harmony with Nature Conference presented by Wild Ones Fox Valley Area.

<http://www.towardharmonywithnature.org/index.html>

Mar 02, 2013 (Sat)

The Design with Nature conference "Reading Our Landscape" will be presented by the Wild Ones Twin Cities and St. Croix Oak Savannah Chapters at the Plymouth Creek Center.

www.DesignWithNatureConference.org

Mar 09, 2013 (Sat)


Botanist and author Tim Spira will be a featured speaker at Wild Ones Tennessee Valley's second annual Native Plant and Natural Landscaping symposium in the Chattanooga State Humanities Auditorium. <http://www.chattanooga natives.blogspot.com/>

Apr 9, 2013 (Tues)

Green Thumb Living conference, will be hosted by Wild Ones Affiliate member Green Lake Conference Center and held at the Center in Green Lake, Wisconsin. Email ValariePowell@glcc.org for more information.

Apr 17, 2013 (Wed)

Fox Cities Book Festival will be held April 17-24 at venues from Kaukauna to Neenah, Wisconsin and all points in between including the WILD Center. See page 3 for details..



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.

Stuff: Computer with Windows Operating System (less than four years old), laptop or desktop • First-Aid Kit • Four-Rung Stepladder • Gardening Tools • Household Tools (circle and /or jig saw, various small tools) • Canoe or Kayak • ¼ HP Motor for Seed Sorter • Guest Chairs • Native Trees (6 to 8 ft.): Basswood, maple, and oak (bur, white, and swamp white oak) • Native Shrubs: Witchhazel • 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.



Remember to use the Wild Ones portal when making purchases from Amazon.com Wild Ones earned \$117.42 in rebate fees from member purchases during November and December 2012.

Go to www.wildones.org/store/bookstore

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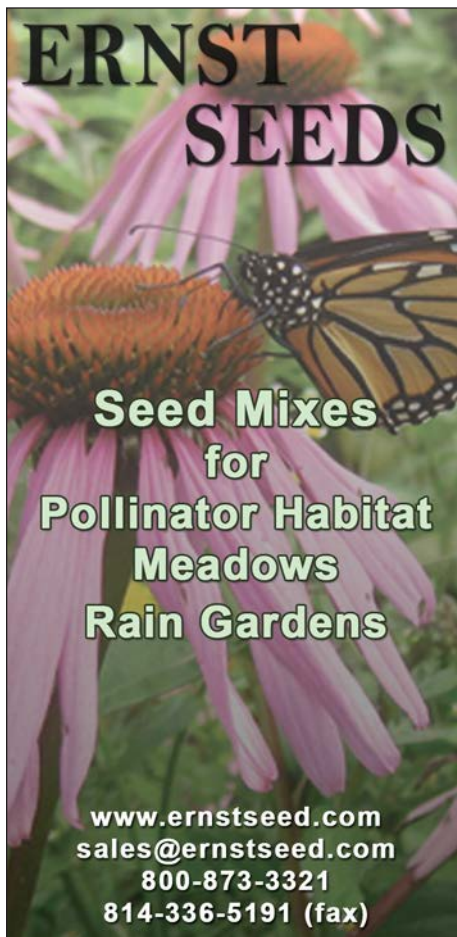
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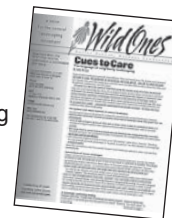
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