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May/June/July 2015

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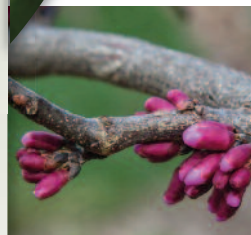
Harbingers of Spring PHOTO KEY

Row 1: *Anemonella*, *Senecio*, *Toothwort* [BETTY HALL PHOTOS];
Row 2: *Mertensia* [CLAIRE KIM], *Pussy Willow* [BETTY HALL],
Mayapple [JOAN RUDOLPH], *Sessile Trillium* [BETTY HALL];
Row 3: *Redbud* [BETTY HALL], *Spring Beauty* [VALERIE LINDEMAN],
Elderberry buds [BETTY HALL], *Bloodroot* [VICKIE BONK];
Row 4: *Dutchman's Breeches* [ALISTAIR BRADLEY], *Violets*
[BETTY HALL], *Woodland Yellow Violet* [ARLENE KUAR]

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JOURNAL





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Wild ones is a national not-for-profit organization with local chapters that teaches about the many benefits of growing native wildflowers in people's yards.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT



Tim Lewis
President

Preparing For Donna's Retirement

As we announce the news that Donna will be leaving us later this year, I find myself thinking back over the organization's history, realizing how far we've come and what great opportunities lie ahead. Donna told us many months ago that she planned to retire this summer, wanting to give the Board plenty of time to find a new Executive Director. We know we cannot find another Donna—there isn't one! But our hope is to select someone with the experience, capability and commitment to move Wild Ones to the new phase of development outlined in our recently approved strategic plan.

Wild Ones is growing and changing. Its infrastructure is solid and in place. In the coming months and years, we want to build on that base, raise national awareness of the organization, and focus our efforts on programs that are the most important in furthering our mission.

We intend to post the job opening in May, interview candidates in June and July, and bring our new Executive Director on board in August. There will be a period of 2-3 months during which time Donna and

her replacement will work together to insure a smooth transition. The Executive Committee and Board will oversee all of this and be involved where needed.

I want to emphasize, as I have before, what a wonderful asset we have in the WILD Center and its 16 acres of diverse habitat. The Center will continue to be our headquarters, a gathering place for members, and the site of demonstration gardens to showcase native plant landscaping. We trust that the members of the Wild Ones Fox Valley Chapter and of the local community will continue to volunteer to maintain the gardens as they have in the past. And we know our many Wild Ones members will continue their vital support and involvement in the organization and its activities as we move ahead.

Donna—with the help of committed members, staff and Board members—has brought Wild Ones to where it is today. We cannot thank her enough for her leadership, her hours of unpaid overtime, her management of all aspects of the organization, and her unflagging dedication to the work we do. All our best wishes go with her into a well-deserved retirement. 🌸



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August 14 – 16, 2015



2015 Annual Conference

— See page 21 for more info —



Wild Ones definition of a native plant:
A native plant is a species that occurs naturally in a particular region, ecosystem and/or habitat and was present prior to European settlement.



Donna VanBuecken
Executive Director

– Citizen Science Opportunity –

Our **Wild for Monarchs** campaign continues to be a worthwhile educational and advocacy endeavor for Wild Ones. Our printed materials and our website information are being used by many thousands of people throughout the USA and as far away as Canada, Mexico, Italy and France. So the next step naturally seems to be to become involved with the research efforts related to the monarch.

We Wild Ones have the awesome opportunity to participate in this research through a variety of citizen science programs.
<http://www.wildones.org/citizen-scientist/>

With that goal in mind, we are partnering with several more Monarch Joint Venture (MJV) partners to help monarch butterfly conservation through citizen science monitoring. Journey North, Monarch Watch, Monarch Larva Monitoring Project and Monarch Health have established programs which offer various levels of participation and expertise for citizen scientists. We will be hooking up with them to provide training for interested Wild Ones members either through local chapters or through the annual conference held in August at the WILD Center.

The **Wild Ones Native Plant Garden/Habitat Recognition Program** has been slowly getting off the ground, but we're finally at the point where we can show you the results of your efforts. Our mapping function is up along with the descriptions of the various garden sites and some lovely photos to compliment the listing. An added feature is a resource listing along with their description of their site and the plants. Check it out. Don't hesitate to add your site to this effort which establishes a view of Wild Ones member wildlife corridors. <http://www.wildones.org/butterfly-garden-program/>



(See ad on page 11)



I'm sure you'll be happy to know that we have begun to implement the actions outlined in the **Wild Ones Strategic Plan**. If you haven't taken the opportunity to read through it yet, please do. You'll find it located at <http://www.wildones.org/about-us-2/> And the CPA has picked up our files and has begun the financial review for 2014.

I hope the announcement of my imminent retirement doesn't come as too much of a surprise. This moment has been long-planned. The Board has been supportive as we have discussed this change and has put together a well thought-out plan for finding my replacement. Passing into the next phase of my life will be bittersweet since I have loved my job as your Executive Director of Wild Ones and have loved sharing my passion for native plants with all of you. You will be hearing more from me about this later in the year as we move toward a transition.

— Donna

— JOB OPENING —

Executive Director Position

Position Description

Executive Director of
Wild Ones: Native Plants,
Natural Landscapes

Overview

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is the leader and primary representative of the organization, responsible for accomplishing Wild Ones' mission through day-to-day management of staff, national programs, fundraising, chapter and membership development, and partnerships with other organizations.

Location

Based at the national headquarters, the WILD Center (*Wild Ones Institute for Learning and Development*) near Appleton, Wisconsin.

More information about this position

<http://www.wildones.org/executive-director-search/>

To Apply

Send resumé and cover letter to:
edsearch@wildones.org

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Monarch Watch

A new Citizen Science Project is born: Investigating the Possibility of a Trans-Gulf Monarch Migration

By Candy Sarikonda, Wild Ones Oak Openings Region Chapter

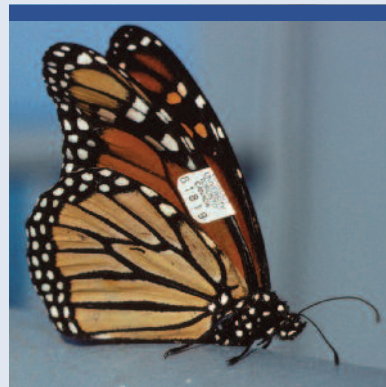
On September 29, 2011, I brought a dozen monarch butterflies to Sylvania Franciscan Academy, to teach eager students how to tag a butterfly. We tagged several butterflies that day, releasing them and watching as they climbed a nearby thermal. One student exclaimed, "Oh, I hope they make it to Mexico! Will you tell us if they do?" "Of course!" I replied. And six weeks later, I received a thrilling email from Monarch Watch—one female monarch, released by me and the students in Sylvania, Ohio, had been found by Edward Brandao in New Orleans, Louisiana. PPA 869 had travelled 1,013 miles in 43 days and was still alive when Mr. Brandao found her and re-released her. The students were ecstatic when I relayed the message to them.

I wondered where PPA 869 went from that point. Did she hug the Gulf coast, eventually making her way to the overwintering sanctuaries in Mexico? Or did she try to cross the open waters of the Gulf?

Most researchers agree that monarchs are reluctant to cross open water, especially if they cannot see land. And this view is supported by some tag recoveries. But after fishing the Great Lakes most of my life, and spending time documenting the monarch migration through the Lake Erie Islands, it was clear to me that monarchs may be capable of attempting a trans-Gulf flight. But was there any evidence that they do so?

I began researching Journey North. I noted a few reports of monarchs being sighted on offshore drilling platforms, or by shrimp boat captains fishing the Gulf. These sightings usually occurred 20-100 nautical miles offshore. I noted definite debate over whether or not a Gulf crossing would be successful, and if significant numbers of migrants would survive the crossing.

I saw a video of an interview with Ranger Mike Aymond of Gulf Islands National Seashore Park. He mentioned the park was a migratory pit-stop for monarchs. I contacted him. "What have you seen?" I asked. Mr. Aymond stated, "I have had several colleagues confirm that they have been visited by monarchs while on



Tagged monarch
WC-280, October 1991

research vessels 100 miles out in the Gulf." Whoa!

I became more and more interested in the oil and gas platforms, referred to as 'rigs'. Could rig workers help in this effort? Would they be willing to report their sightings, or even allow a researcher on board their platforms?

With a little more online digging, I learned of one researcher who had already documented the migration from the rigs. Dr. Gary Noel Ross, an entomologist from Louisiana, had spent every October from 1991 to 1995 on board the oil platforms. I contacted him, and he immediately agreed to an interview.

I spoke with Dr. Ross for over an hour. I asked, "What got you started? How did you get on the rigs?" Dr. Ross explained that in 1990, a note from Bryant Mather appeared in the News of the Lepidopterist Society. In the note, Mr. Mather recounted a conversation with Hylma Gordon, who was a cook on a supply boat that serviced many of the oil and gas platforms. She reported seeing "a cloud" of monarchs coming and landing on every available surface of a rig, with some butterflies landing on top of one another. The numbers of monarchs were so great that rig workers actually had to resort to using hoses to wash monarchs off the equipment. When Mrs. Gordon asked some of the seasoned workers about their past experiences, they stated the monarchs' arrival was a yearly occurrence in the area. Mrs. Gordon mentioned the date of October 17-18th. Dr. Ross was fascinated by this report, and proceeded to contact Marathon oil executives. They in turn suggested he contact Petroleum Helicopters, Inc. This was a helicopter agency that serviced the rigs.

Dr. Ross was able to track down two helicopter pilots, both of whom enjoyed tracking the bird migration in the Gulf. Dr. Ross met with pilot Tom Schaal, and inquired about his experiences with monarchs on the Gulf. Mr. Schaal had been flying the Gulf for over 20 years. He remembered some occasions in which he observed monarchs so thick that they appeared as a stream of

smoke moving to the southwest. He often saw them resting on the fence surrounding an offshore heliport, particularly one to two days after a cold front moved through. Armed with this news, Dr. Ross sought permission to board a platform 72 miles south of Cameron Parish, Louisiana. With permission granted from Union Oil Company of California (UNOCAL), Dr. Ross, and his cinematographer friend Don Valentine, boarded a platform, known as West Cameron Block 280. Dr. Ross chose mid-October, based on previous reports of monarchs from helicopter pilots and rig workers, and spent 2-3 weeks each October observing the migrating butterflies.



Dr. Gary Ross papering butterfly WC-280, October 1991

Dr. Ross explained, "We knew when they (the monarchs) would be coming. They would come behind a cold front—when the weather cleared a day or two later, they would show up. They often came in pairs or groups of 20-30, and usually around 5pm. They would land, and sometimes spend the night, leaving the next day. Other times, we would watch them land around the dinner hour. We would then leave to eat dinner. When we returned to look for them afterwards, they were gone. Sometimes, we saw them take off, even in pitch black. They usually headed south southwest." Don Valentine was able to capture some video footage of the monarchs, and this footage can be seen in the film, "The Wonders of God's Creation." Dr. Ross reports his observations in detail in the article, "A Clockwork Orange".

Notably, Dr. Ross also theorizes the monarchs may return from Mexico across the Gulf in spring. He described viewing monarchs from onshore in Cameron Parish, and reported seeing monarchs fly in from the Gulf. A report on Journey North by Carol Hough might suggest this attempted crossing does occur as well.

Can monarchs make it across the Gulf? That remains to be seen. With a good tailwind, and a powerful will to survive, it may not be so unlikely. But getting proof of a deliberate, successful crossing is another matter. Says Dr. Chip Taylor, "Rumors of monarchs showing up in the Yucatan and washing up dead along the coast of Honduras have popped up from time to time but there are no data – none – substantiating these rumors. Similarly, monarchs have been sighted along the coast of Veracruz in Mexico in numbers suggesting a non-Mexican origin but, again, there is no verification these monarchs originated north of the border." Dr. Ross tagged 100 monarchs on the oil platforms,

but did not get a recovery. The chances of a recovery are "slimmer than finding a needle in a haystack," says Dr. Ross.

Still, needles in haystacks have been found.

Wendy Caldwell, the Coordinator for the Monarch Joint Venture, took the initiative. She published my report on the possibility of a

trans-Gulf migration in the MJV news. I subsequently shared this report with subscribers to Monarch Watch's listserv, D-plex. Dr. Tracy Villareal, a marine biologist with the University of Texas at Austin, read the news article. Excited about the possibility of documenting the migration across the Gulf, Dr. Villareal began working on the


development of a citizen science project designed to track the monarch migration over water.

Called Marine Monarchs, the new project aims to enlist the aid of oil rig workers, watermen, naturalists, and Gulf-area residents to document monarch sightings in and around the Gulf, and even over other bodies of water. The project is seeking funding for a specialized app that will allow an observer to take a photo of the monarch (or monarchs), and instantly record weather information and flight vector data. Dr. Chip Taylor has also joined the project, and the new app will also aid in tracking the migration over land. For the first time ever, flight vectors will easily be captured, and researchers will be able to tell which direction monarchs are intending to travel, and how weather influences their travel.

If you have seen monarchs in and along the Gulf, or know of people who have seen monarchs flying over lake, ocean or especially Gulf waters, please report your sightings to the Marine Monarchs facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/marine.monarchs> We want to know what you have seen! Citizen scientists are invaluable to the study of the monarch butterfly and its migration. Please share your report! ❀

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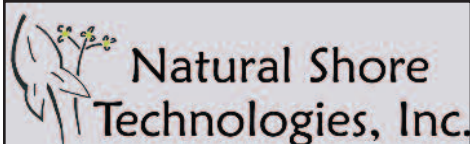
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BE A
HERO
TO THE
POLLINATORS



By Joan Z. Calder, author of the children's book "Airplanes in the Garden."
Joan gardens in California.

Many years ago, quite by accident, I discovered what I liked most in my garden. It wasn't a fancy patio with plush seating and mountain views in the distance, and although the humming birds cutting in front of me while making their way to the salvia did make my heart race; there was something even better.

In a new sitting area I had created in one corner of our back yard, I planted three, one-gallon mint bush plants (*Monardella villosa*) in front of the bench, but on a slightly lower level. My goal was to have a tidy plant with fragrant blue flowers and just enough space for my feet when sitting at the bench after the mint bush got to full growth.

Surprisingly, three things happened.

First my husband and I realized this was a perfect place to enjoy our martinis, alone or with two of our friends, and it became known as the 'Martini Bench'. Sitting on the bench gave us a view of our house and remaining yard with a new perspective. At first I felt like I was on vacation – gazing at the colorful coneflowers in the garden and a rarely seen view of the house. Next we discovered by placing the bench with the setting sun in back of us we could read later into the evening with the light illuminating the pages of our books. But the most surprising discovery occurred after the mint bush was somewhat mature. My husband looked down and discovered movement on the mint bush. "I have never seen these bugs in the yard," my husband admitted. An entire village of insects – butterflies, bees, ladybugs and more – all looked like they were having a good time together within inches of our eyes.

This bench extracted an entirely different garden experience for us than we imagined. Excursions to the bench at all times of the day resulted in deep discussion on what was on the mint bush and what they were up to. "It's a happy village," was my first response. Now, I realize I had created a pollinator habitat, before I had ever heard that term. The insects may not all have been happy, and some were undoubtedly lunch for some of the other insects. That is how nature works, after all.

We became familiar with the insects on the plants and wanted to watch their village. It was entertainment for us. It was live theater in our back yard.

I was inspired, as a garden designer, to place plants close to the seating areas. Or rather place seating areas in very close view of the plants.

It has been eighteen years since I designed the 'Martini Bench' garden and I now lead a crusade calling every man, woman and child to become a hero to the pollinators.

After all, over 85 percent of flowering plants require pollination and one of every three bites of our food comes from these pollinated plants.

But wait: What is pollination?

Flowers have male and female parts. When a pollen grain from the anther, the male part, finds its way to the stigma, the female part of a flower, pollination happens. This is the first step in a process that produces seeds, fruits and the next generation of plants.

Think of it this way. Cut an apple in half, through the fat part, not the stem end. You should find a five pointed star with two seeds at each point, ten altogether – if the apple blossom has been fully pollinated. If there are fewer than ten seeds, not enough pollen reached the stigma. If no pollen reached the stigma, there would be no apple at all. The shrubs and trees you see in the wild would be there for a while, but without bees and other pollinators even those would disappear.

What are Pollinators?

Pollinators are honeybees, native bees, butterflies (and a lot of other insects), bats, birds, rain, and wind. Most of us know about the honeybees and butterflies but the native bees are important too. Honeybees came from Europe in the 1600's but the native bees have been here long before them. There are approximately 4,000 native bees in the USA and many of them live in the ground most of their lives, so we are not readily aware that they exist. Most of the native bees don't even sting because they



Milberts Tortoiseshell on common Milkweed
PHOTO: Ken Greshowak



Fly on Sweet Coneflower
PHOTO: Kathy Bildner



Wild Ones on a Savannah Safari
PHOTO: Kati Barricklow

lack stingers. Native bees are solitary bees and usually do not join others in a nest. They have hairier bodies that make them more efficient moving pollen from one flower to the next, and more able to work in cooler temperatures than can honey bees.

Become a Hero to the Pollinators – Learn their Life Cycles

When I teach a garden class I ask the students to imagine what a mama bear looks like. Then I ask them to imagine what a baby bear looks like. They agree a mama and baby bear look similar, but the baby bear is smaller. Not so with insects. They experience a process called *complete metamorphosis* as they age and progress through the various body forms. There is no similarity of form between one stage and the next: from egg, to larva, to pupa,

to adult form. By learning to recognize the life stages of the pollinators in your part of the country you will gain an understanding of how to protect them. When you sit up close to the plants in your outdoor space, like I did with my mint bush on my 'Martini Bench', you will become aware of and appreciate the existence of many different pollinators.

Learn the life cycles of the butterflies in your area. Their host plants (the plants they frequent at various stages of their lives), and chrysalises come in a myriad of forms. It is easy to discard one of their camouflaged chrysalises as bird excrement, or something to fear.

A native bee also passes through the four stages of complete metamorphosis: egg, larva, pupa, and adult. The changes all

happen before the bees emerge from their brood cell as adults, capable of mating. Then the female bee must look for a suitable nest to lay her eggs. This nest may be a patch of ground, an old mouse nest, wood or twigs. The female collects pollen and nectar, forms it into a pollen-ball, places it in the brood cell, lays one egg on it, seals the brood cell and goes out to collect more pollen and nectar and repeat the process. A larva emerges from the egg and feeds on the pollen-ball. The next stage, the pupa stage, may last eight or nine months depending on the species. When they emerge they are adult bees with wings, ready to feed, mate and continue the cycle.

Solitary ground-nesting native bees spend most of the year growing through the egg, larval, and pupal stages while hidden in their nest cells underground. To find these

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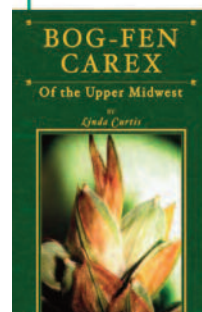
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Spring Feeding [Photo contest; 2nd Place]
PHOTO: Karen Schulz

sites, search for holes in the ground, or bees flying low as if looking for something besides flowers.

Orchard mason bees emerge in the early spring, in time to pollinate the early fruit – blueberries, peaches, apples and so on. The pollinating happens as the queen is collecting pollen, laying eggs and provisioning her future off-spring. After she has laid all of her eggs, she dies by the beginning of summer.

Then the leaf cutter bees come on the scene to pollinate the summer plants and herbs. After the females lay their eggs, they too die. The eggs of the native bees are hidden from sight in the soil, holes in wood, sunflower stalks and what most of us consider debris in the garden. We don't see them so we are not aware they even

exist except for those few weeks a year. Some are so small we scarcely notice them.

Become a hero to the pollinators – Give them a home

Pollinators want what we want – food, water and a safe place to call home. All bees require foraging areas where they seek nectar for energy and pollen to provide for their young. As bees forage for nectar and pollen they are pollinating our plants – moving pollen from the anther, the male part of the flower to the sigma, the female part. Thus doing us a big favor by providing fruits, nuts and vegetables for us and food for much of the wildlife.

Wood-nesting bees are solitary, often nesting in soft-pithed twigs or beetle tunnels in standing dead trees. Cleaning up the gardens at the end of summer destroys

many of the eggs and larva the female bees worked so hard to produce. You may have dug up a grub and not realized it could have become a native bee.

A pollinator garden can be developed anywhere. Plant it with a diversity of native flowers that together provide bloom from early spring to late summer, and you will create a valuable resource for pollinators. Native plants match the feeding habits and reproductive cycles of native bees and provide the proper nutrition to keep them healthy.

Native bees use untidy areas of the garden to nest such as open sandy ground, corners of rough grass, untilled ground, brush piles, and old tree stumps and snags. Consider leaving some of these for wildlife habitat and supplement nesting opportunities with mason bee houses or bundles of hollow plant stems. 🌸

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We were particularly interested in receiving a report on a Seeds For Education Grant to a school in the heart of New York City.

By Sherri Sémon, Project Coordinator for this SFE Grant, who sent this response.

We were very adamant about creating the important connection between the milkweed and the Monarch. As a New York City school, where children live on asphalt, this was a critical natural component. We purchased *Asclepias incarnata* from Glover Perennials through our industry contact. Atlantic Nurseries has this plant as well. I had also seen it at Lowes in New Jersey – Tonell Avenue Store, (in their native section) however, when I went back to purchase it, it was already sold out. *continued*

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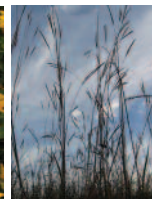
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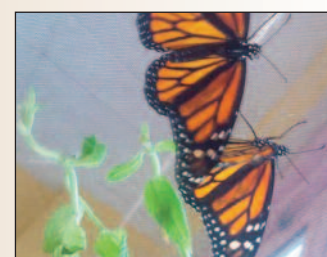
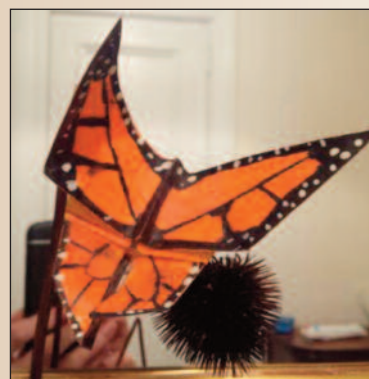
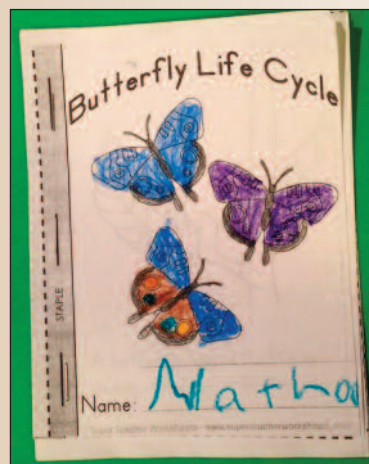
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How did we manage the connection to the classroom? Every classroom had a 24" tall Caterpillar tent viewing station, with a potted up Asclepias inside. When we received our caterpillars, we transferred them to the plants, which were about 20" tall, and that is where they lived and munched the plants for all of our kindergarteners to see daily in their classrooms. This was a thrilling adventure for the children, and the teachers were using the experience even further than expected. The teachers in particular loved the experience, and repeated many times how they sometimes had to take turns to have children observe the "amazing leaf eating" that was happening before their eyes.

After the children released the eclosed butterflies in our Waystation Garden, we took the plants back from the classrooms and re-planted them in our garden. This coming year, because



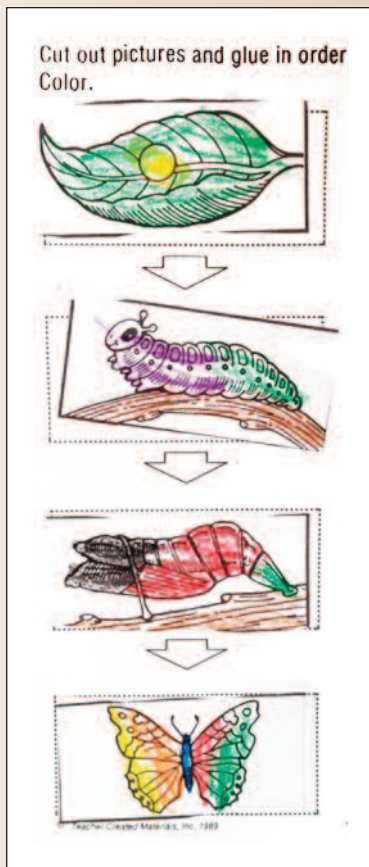
we have so many plants, we will not need to buy any. We will simply dig some up and pot them for the two weeks in the classroom! Our teachers are all looking forward to repeating the program this year, and now some first grade teachers are asking if they can be included as well.

We are absolutely thrilled with this project and the outcome. As you may know, there are about 4 Monarch Waystations in Central Park, New York City. We are very proud to be an oasis and a certified Waystation nearby. We are looking forward to doing the project again this June, and having further integration with our older children this spring on our new Roof Garden Waystation.


We thank you again for this grant. You have touched many lives, and made a difference for many years to come. 🌸



PS 84 students read books about monarchs, made butterfly lifecycle books, kept journals, created monarch art projects and watched their classroom caterpillar transform from chrysalis into a butterfly.



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2015 is the International Year of Soils

In a fistful of productive soil there should be more tiny (mostly microscopic), living creatures than there are humans on this Earth. While feeding on plant matter in the soil, these creatures break down the organic matter, releasing carbon, nitrogen (and many other elements), into forms that are then recycled throughout the ecosystem. The greater the total numbers and population diversity of these creatures the more efficiently the ecosystem works. They thrive on a diverse and plentiful input of plant matter.

Google "Soil Food Web NRCS"—where you'll find articles by Elaine Ingham. She has a way of presenting this material that brings it to life.

You might also look at past issues of the WILD ONES JOURNAL. Go to the Archived Copies of the JOURNAL in the Member section. Find the following issues for articles on the Soil: 2008 #4, page 4; 2008 #5, page 1; 2009 #1, page 1; 2009 #2, page 1; 2009 #3, page 8. Ed.

Healthy soil is a found

By Janet Allen

The food web is made of producers, consumers, and decomposers.

Plants play a key role in spinning the food web since they're the *Producers*, making food from sunlight, water, and carbon dioxide through the alchemy of photosynthesis. The *Consumers* are the insects and other herbivores that eat the plants, as well as the carnivores that eat the herbivores and other carnivores.

With the beauty and drama the producers and consumers create, it's easy to overlook the rest of the food web: the *Decomposers*. The decomposers are nature's recyclers, breaking down dead plant and animal matter and releasing the nutrients back into the food web in a form plants can use. These soil organisms also protect plants against invaders and even help create the structure of the soil.

We may notice larger decomposers, such as vultures or even beetles or centipedes, but we're often oblivious to the work of the tinier decomposers living in the soil. If we squint we can see some of the smaller organisms, such as springtails and mites, but most micro-fauna and micro-flora—the yeasts, bacteria, fungi, protozoa and so on—

are too tiny to see without a microscope. But they're there. In fact, there can be more organisms in a teaspoon of good quality soil than there are people on the entire planet!

Protecting and encouraging soil organisms

Without a flourishing soil food web, the rest of the food web just wouldn't work. Tending to these soil organisms creates a healthy foundation for plants.

The following strategies recommended by *Landscape for Life™*, based on the principles of the *Sustainable Sites Initiative™*, are designed to protect and encourage soil organisms. These practices may seem like just common sense, but they still aren't widely used in conventional landscaping.

Limit soil disturbance and tillage

When my husband and I started our first garden, almost 40 years ago, we bought a rototiller. Ads for this expensive machine suggested it would be impossible to garden without one! We diligently rototilled our modest garden each year, unwittingly compacting the soil that lies under the fluffy layer of soil the tiller created on the surface.

We eventually grew tired of storing this big machine, and since our soil was easy to dig by hand (especially by our younger selves), we sold the tiller. Happily, we did the right thing even though it was for the wrong reason. The right reasons would have been to protect the soil structure and to avoid harming the micro- and macro-organisms living in it.

To protect the structure of our soil, we created permanent beds for our edible garden and have since limited any disturbance to light spading—less and less each year. And we've generally left the soil undisturbed and untrodden in our meadow and woodland areas, accessing these areas with stepping-stones strategically scattered about. We've also created permanent mulched paths throughout the yard.

Restore overly compacted soils to allow air and water movement.

Compacted soil can be improved. Top-dressing with several inches of compost, shredded leaf mulch, or wood chips will gradually heal the damage, especially if the soil hasn't been compacted by heavy construction machinery or constant foot traffic.

The Soil Food Web

Credit: Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS). 2000. Soil Biology Primer. Rev. ed. Ankeny, IA: Soil and Water Conservation Society.

The diagram illustrates the flow of energy and nutrients through the soil food web. It starts with **Plants** (Shoots and roots) and **Organic Matter** (Waste, residue and metabolites from plants, animals and microbes) as the primary sources of energy. These are consumed by **First trophic level: Photosynthesizers**. The next level, **Second trophic level: Decomposers**, includes **Fungi** (Mycorrhizal fungi, Saprophytic fungi), **Bacteria**, **Nematodes** (Root-feeders), and **Protozoa** (Amoebae, flagellates, and ciliates). These organisms are then consumed by **Third trophic level: Shredders** (Arthropods) and **Fourth trophic level: Higher level predators** (Nematodes, Arthropods). Finally, **Fifth and higher trophic levels: Higher level predators** include **Birds** and **Animals**.

First trophic level:
Photosynthesizers

Second trophic level:
Decomposers
Mutualists
Pathogens, Parasites
Root-feeders

Third trophic level:
Shredders
Predators
Grazers

Fourth trophic level:
Higher level predators

Fifth and higher trophic levels:
Higher level predators

Removing every dead leaf...Not only does this practice undoubtedly remove life on the ground—overwintering moth and butterfly pupae, even nesting materials for next year's birds—but it also eliminates the raw materials that support life in the soil.

duration of life on earth

Earthworms help this process along by pulling organic material down into the soil, a reason worms are popular with vegetable gardeners. (In our region, however, as in other regions that were once covered by glaciers, earthworms are not native and are detrimental to forests; so we try not to intentionally add earthworms or transport to other locations any compost or mulch that might contain worms.)

Avoid leaving soils bare by covering soils with plants or mulch. Regularly apply layers of compost or organic mulch to the top of the soil.

When we first created our garden beds, we diligently mulched between the plants using an easily-available resource: the grass clippings of our neighbors, who kindly collected and even delivered them to us.

When we later became concerned about the lawn chemicals coating the grass clippings, we switched to shredded leaves. This made excellent pesticide-free organic mulch. As the plants grew and as we planted the beds more thickly, the beds became self-mulched, being covered with a solid carpet of plants whose leaves decay in place each year.

We've come a little later to covering the soil in our edible garden, but we now grow cover crops or add layers of compost to protect the soil and to provide more organic matter for the *soil food web*.

Avoid pesticide use that may harm soil biota.

We're increasingly alarmed by the harm pesticides cause to birds, butterflies, bees, and other creatures. And we reason that anything that can affect these comparatively giant aboveground creatures can even more easily harm the tiny creatures in the soil. In fact, it can take a number of years for life to return to soil after having been killed off by pesticides.

We now maintain a completely organic yard, edible garden and all, and don't like to remember the days when we applied pesticides and chemical fertilizers to our vegetables and lawn. After cutting back and eventually eliminating these products, our meadow, woodlands, edible garden, and lawn are now all thriving, undoubtedly helped out by all the beneficial soil organisms that have subsequently found it again safe to take up residence above and below ground.

Plant a diverse garden to provide a variety of food sources.

Different animals eat different things. Toads eat slugs, but butterflies drink nectar. Even within the same taxonomic rank there are differences: goldfinches, for example, eat primarily seeds, but yellow warblers eat primarily insects. To support a diversity of creatures in our yard, we grow as many species of native plants as we can.

What is true for life above ground is also true for life in the soil. Is it any wonder that the multitude of species living in our soil also eat a great variety of foods? How do we provide for them all?

Of course, the soil food web itself provides a lot of the food: higher-level consumers like centipedes eat secondary consumers like nematodes and their by-products; these secondary consumers eat primary consumers such as bacteria and their by-products; and these primary consumers eat organic matter, such as the dead leaves of our plants.

By planting a variety of native plants we're providing plant material that supports the diversity of creatures in a healthy soil food web.

continued on next page



Janet Allen's grandson at an age when he really appreciated the wooded path.

References:

Landscape for Life:
<http://landscapeforlife.org/>
 (Sponsored by the U.S. Botanic Garden and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin)

Biodiversity of Plants is a Good Thing... Even When They're Dead – New England Wildflower Society blog at <http://newfs.org/blog>

Great Lakes Worm Watch
www.greatlakeswormwatch.org

Our websites: Our Habitat Garden
www.ourhabitatgarden.org
 and Our Edible Garden
www.ourediblegarden.org

Science of Healthy Soil: a series of short lectures on various aspects of working with the soil
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HOF6NfLm7M&index=1&list=PL4J8PxoprGa3wFYXFu-BW_mMatlelt0

Grass-cycle—use a lawn mower that returns mulched lawn clippings to the soil.

It's hard to believe that we once bagged up our grass clippings. At least we had put them into our compost pile. Now we simply leave the clippings on the lawn and let them decompose as free lawn fertilizer. (The bigger change, though, is that we now have very little lawn left, having converted it to planting beds and paths.)

Allow leaves and other plant materials to decompose throughout the garden.

Every fall, people in our community scrupulously remove every dead leaf, needle, and twig from underneath trees and bushes or on planting beds, stuffing the offending material into big paper bags or piling it at the curb, then paying taxes to have a pay loader and dump truck cart it all away. Any dead plant material that escapes in fall is captured in spring cleanup.

Not only does this practice undoubtedly remove life on the ground—overwintering moth and butterfly pupae, even nesting materials for next year's birds—but it also eliminates the raw materials that support life in the soil.

Except on the lawn, we've always left leaves and other plant debris where they fall, knowing that this plant debris would enrich the soil. And that it has. With three decades worth of decomposed plant matter, our soil is sweet-smelling, crumbly, and dark, a gourmet restaurant for all the living things that call our soil home. They pay for their meal by releasing nutrients that support our lush yard, brimming with life, both in the soil and above it.

Stewards of our soil

No one questions the importance of clean water and clean air, but life on earth depends just as much on healthy soil. And healthy soil is more than just weathered rock and minerals, more than even organic matter: Healthy soil is teeming with life.

As we know, native plants support wildlife, but soil that's full of life provides the foundation for these plants.

Our landscaping practices can help preserve, protect, and even restore healthy soil. By protecting and encouraging soil organisms we participate in preserving one of the key foundations of life on earth. 🌱

SFE Grant Program Grants for 2015

Wild Ones is pleased to announce the winners of this year's Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program.

1. Alaska Native Cultural Charter School, Alaska Native Traditional Learning Garden, Partner-at-Large (AK)
2. West Side Christian School, Brian Dyk Nature Preserve Native Plant Restoration, River City – Grand Rapids (MI) Chapter
3. Barton Open School Foundation, Felicity's Native Garden – Clara Barton Open School, Twin Cities (MN) Chapter
4. Hudson High School, Hudson High Outdoor Classroom, St Croix Oak Savanna (MN) Chapter
5. Holly Springs Elementary School, Holly Springs Elementary School PTA, Partner-at-Large (NC)
6. Nature's Classroom Institute of Wisconsin, NCIW Pollinator Pals, Kettle Moraine (WI) Chapter
7. Bolingbrook High School, Bolingbrook High School Outdoor Lab/Prairie Restoration, Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter
8. Nuestro Mundo Community School, Nuestro Mundo Community School Rain Garden, Madison (WI) Chapter
9. Mesa High School, Desert Pollinator Garden, Partner-at-Large (AZ)
10. Bill Roberts School, Bill Roberts Native Plants of Colorado Educational Planter, Front Range (CO) Chapter
11. Talahi Community School, A Native Plant Area for the Reading Garden, St Cloud (MN) Chapter

Monarch Watch will again be adding to the grant awards once the projects have been registered a Monarch Waystations.

If you reside in the area of any of these grant winners, please don't hesitate to lend a hand to help them successfully establish and maintain their planned outdoor learning projects.



THE NEXT GENERATION



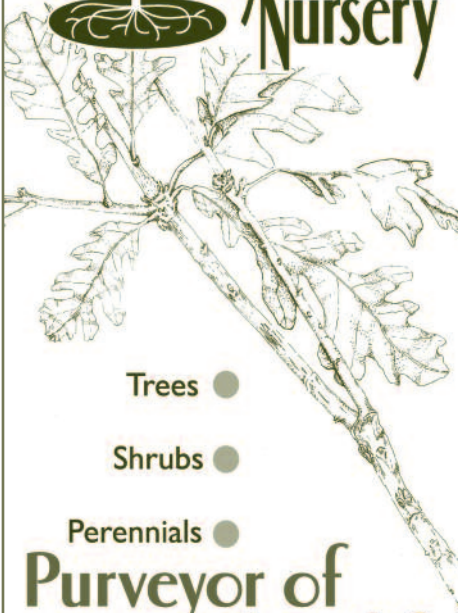
Above:
Daven, Maya,
Jayden Sarikonda
take the butterfly
pledge

Below:
Jaden Sarikonda
takes the
butterfly pledge
in front of his
sister Maya's
Nature Buddies
poster.



Calan Rans, Jan Hunter's grandson, on a hike, found an oak leaf as big as his head!

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Finishing the Job of Clearing Invasive Shrubs

By Connor Shaw, owner,
Possibility Place Nursery;
Wild Ones Business member

I recently read an article on removal of invasive winged burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) from a woodland. The volunteers showed before and after pictures that were very impressive. While I applaud all people who remove invasives, I must point out that their work has just begun. All invasive shrubs generally produce great numbers of seeds. The volunteers have a minimum of 3-5 years of making sure those invasives don't come back.

A bigger problem is that those invasives occupied a space. Because Mother Nature dislikes a void, she will fill it with something, most likely with more invasives because that is what is available. Native shrubs and understory trees are almost non-existent in many of our woods, due to long-time overgrazing, historically by farm animals, and more recently, by deer. An increase in shade, provided by the large trees, has also been a factor in preventing regeneration of a native understory

Once the native woody understory is extirpated from a woods, they never come back. Woodland wildflowers seem to have the ability to stick around even in diminished numbers. Once the invasives are removed, most of the time, the wildflowers are able to come back.

So, we must fill the void left by the removed invasives. The first thing we do is determine the type of soil. Is the soil sandy, clay, gravel, well drained, or poorly drained. You can consult the USDA Soil and Water Conservation District soil maps for that information. If you have trouble understanding the maps ask the USDA people for help.

Then, we determine what comprises the overstory. In the Midwest we typically have two options: Is it predominantly oaks or maples?

A maple overstory creates a very dense shade making it difficult to establish anything under it. I would even be surprised if there were a lot of invasives under the maples because of the lack of sunlight.

Maples tend to make the soil more alkaline, while oaks make the soil acidic.

Oaks usually allow dappled shade which has the potential to allow an understory to flourish. I might add "most of the time". I have been in oak woods that were very shaded, particularly if sugar maples are taking over the understory.

Next, we visit woods that have the same soils types and native overstory, near the site you are working on. You take an inventory of the understory plants, so you will know what will work for your site.

Now that the easy part is over, how are we going to get a native woody understory established.

The easiest way is to collect the seed. First get permission to collect the seed and try to get it as close to the site as possible (<100 miles). Local eco-type seed will guarantee the plants will be best adapted to your site.

A couple of words of wisdom on collecting of seed.

- Know what you are collecting and don't taste any of it. Smelling is ok.
- If some of the seed is ripe collect it all now. Tomorrow will be too late.
- Cut ten seeds open to check if you have viable seed. You are checking to see if the seed is hollow and if so it's no good. Look



Urban Forest
PHOTO: Dolly Foster



for other plants to collect from.

■ You are competing against 'professionals' (fauna) for the native seed. They are very effective and their lives depend on it.

■ Clean the seed immediately and get it into the ground. You can always wait, but from our experience (36 yrs.), do it as soon as possible.

Seed spread throughout the landscape is one way to do it. I believe this is an excellent way to do it unless you have deer problem. Then the seed should be clustered and protected with chicken wire. This will protect the seed and seedlings from rabbits and deer, but not the voles and mice. Best of luck.

The next option is bare root plants. Bare root plants are inexpensive when compared to container material. Bare root plants have a very narrow window to plant: generally spring. They have to be handled very carefully. Try not to bruise the roots and keep them wrapped, making sure they are moist at all times. Some woodland species tend to be less available in the trade.

I have visited sites where it appeared all

the bare root plants survived, and sites where none survived. I no longer plant bare root, for I frequently have had very poor success. Losses up to 50 per cent were not uncommon with the more difficult to grow plants. You should put out twice what you want. The plants must be protected if there are deer and rabbit problems.

The last option is to get plants that are grown in a container in a soilless medium. They come in various sizes such as plugs (2x2x4 in.) one, two, three, and five gallon. The expense increases with the size and so does the work. All these plants still need to be protected from herbivores.

Plugs can be planted with a tube planter making them the easiest to plant. The soil does have to be friable and it helps to have a helper. Four to six plants a minute is doable. The downside is most of these plugs are ready in the spring and should be planted then. They can be held until fall, but I always worry about the conditions of the plants, particularly the roots.

Unfortunately, it is up to the consumer to determine whether the roots are circling around themselves and, if so, to correct the problem. This means cutting the roots at the point just before they begin to circle. This is true for all circling roots.

Plants that are planted in the spring may need supplemental water if we get a drought. Plants that are planted in mid-

September to mid-October require less maintenance. Fall plants are definitely starting to become dormant and definitely become dormant when planted. The top may be dormant, but the roots continue to grow until the ground freezes. That is why it is better to plant mid-September than mid-October—to give roots an extra month of growing. If I had my choice I would plant in August, but you would need supplemental watering.

The choice of one, two, three, and five gallons come down to this: larger has generally bigger and better root systems, but costs more. Smaller is also easier to plant. The choice is yours. 🌿



Woodlands in Wisconsin
PHOTO: Nicole Riendeau

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West Town, Neenah	Nut Hatch Overseed, Sherwood
Sunset Park Overseed, Kimberly	Macco Pond, Green Bay
Amy Ave - McMahon, Darboy	Mike Arien's, Brillion
Springfield Restoration, Darboy	Dewey Street Pond, Manitowoc
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WILD ONES STEWARD

A tribute to Peter Oberhauser



Pete releasing a monarch, August 2013, at the WILD Center

Through our Get Wild Stay Wild Program, Pete and Sanny Oberhauser have been members of the Oak Savanna Circle (i.e., members for more than 15 years). Karen Oberhauser, their daughter, is a Professor at the University of Minnesota and heads the Monarch Lab there. She is co-chair of Monarch Joint Venture.

Yellow Warbler
PHOTO: Melissa Meier, USGS

By Karen Oberhauser

Long time Wild Ones member Pete Oberhauser passed away on September 27th, 2014. His daughter, Karen Oberhauser, an Honorary Director of Wild Ones, wrote this tribute to her father.

My interest in conservation, monarch butterflies, native plants, and prairies is not surprising, given all of the time my parents (Pete and Sanny Oberhauser), three sisters, and I spent in nature when I was a child. As a working parent, I came to understand more clearly the competing pulls for family time, and appreciated the choices that my parents made even more. However, it was really after his retirement that Dad's devotion to the natural world became a driving force of his life (perhaps only equaled by his devotion to his children and grandchildren). I am lucky that these interests had so much overlap with what I was doing. In 1997, my students and I started the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP), and my parents are part of a group of four MLMP site teams that have been collecting data over that entire time. As an adult, I've hiked over prairies, both native and restored; canoed down wild rivers; and backpacked in gorgeous mountains with my dad. All of this time involved careful attention to the wild things that were in these spots, and, even after I'd earned a PhD in ecology, frequent lessons from my dad about the things we were seeing. He and Mom put a conservation easement on their land on the Embarrass River in central Wisconsin, where they created an incredible prairie, home to eagles, countless bee and butterfly species, and their MLMP site.

Dad was born in Mason City, Iowa and grew up in Minneapolis. After earning a degree in Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota in 1956, he

practiced as a large-animal veterinarian in Berlin and Clintonville, Wisconsin, until retiring in 1985. After they retired, he and Mom volunteered in the schools, teaching Junior Great Books and sharing their love of the environment with elementary school children. They established the Natural World for Kids Fund to support environmental experiences for students in the Clintonville Public Schools.

Dad was on the board of the Wisconsin Nature Conservancy. He and mom are very involved in nearby nature centers, and are strong supporters and members of the Carleton College Arboretum and dozens of other conservation organizations, including Wild Ones. I think all of this stems from his sincere love of nature; his frequent letters to me always included a summary of the birds and blooms that he was seeing. And once, as my father and I were walking along the river, we sat and listened to a yellow warbler – he turned to me and said, "I think that's my favorite warbler." I'm pretty sure that not many people have a favorite warbler.

On my 43rd birthday, my dad wrote a card that I've kept. He said, "As we cruise down the river in our inner-tubes, we have some control over where we go. The harder we paddle, the fewer rocks we hit, but all cannot be avoided." He ended the letter by saying, "happy birthday to a person who paddles hard." My dad paddled hard; he hit some rocks along the way, but they just made his life, and the lives of people who knew him, more exciting and fun. 🌸

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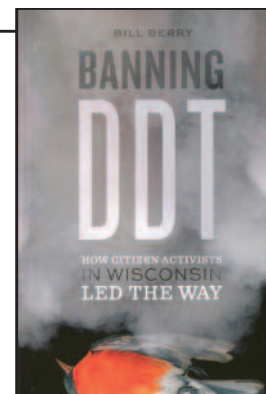
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Banning DDT How Citizen Activists in Wisconsin Led the Way

Bill Berry's book details how citizens, scientists, reporters, and traditional conservationists, including Lorrie Otto, drew attention to the harmful effects of "the miraculous pesticide" DDT.

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Now that spring has sprung we're getting busy at the WILD Center again. Our **First Thursday** brought out a number of volunteers to begin the task of preparing for the warm weather growing season including some welcome sounds from our feathered friends.

Gwynedd Drush-Vetter has been busy promoting **Moving for Monarchs** program. She recently appeared on the TED Talk program (TEDx Plaza Melchor Ocampo). The video she showed during part of her interview featured some scenes from the WILD Center – particularly the prairie and the riparian tree line. See for yourself <http://www.wildones.org/learn/wild-for-monarchs/moving-monarchs/>

Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter members Rich and Pat Fischer are removing thatch from last year's gardens.



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PHOTO: Arlene Kjar



2015 Annual Conference

August 14 – 16, 2015

Wild Ones WILD Center
2285 Butte des Morts Beach Rd.
Neenah, WI 54956

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

FRI. August 14

9:00 am Board Development or
National Committee Meetings
Noon Lunch
2:00 pm National Board Meeting
5:30 pm Welcome Reception and Dinner

SAT. August 15

– Refreshments throughout the day –

8:00 am Nature Trails and Birding
at the WILD Center
9:30 am Workshops
Noon Lunch
1:00 pm Annual Membership Meeting
2:30 pm Speaker Presentation
3:30 pm Workshops
5:30 pm Happy Hour
6:00 pm Dinner on the Prairie
8:00 pm Sing along in the Council Circle

SUN. August 16

8:00 am Stroll the Trestle Trail
9:30 am Workshops
Noon Adjourn

COST

Tentatively, the conference fee will be
\$45/person.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

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Rooms are available with a king bed or two
queens — Thursday, Friday and/or
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Make reservations by July 24th.

Group code: Wild Ones 920-993-1200

See our 2015 Conference webpage
and blog for the most up-to-date info.



<http://www.wildones.org/2015-wild-ones-annual-conference/>



PHOTO: Jim Cudney

Past Workshops

Some of our past workshops have included:

- Becoming a good officer
- How to be an advocate
- How to develop a regional presence
- How to start a Chapter
- Planning a conference
- Using the tools of the Internet
- How to partner with local environmental organizations and succeed
- How to start educating children with a grant program
- Monarchs
- Expectations of a board member
- Promotional material and idea exchange



PHOTO: Tim Lewis

Past Speakers

Past speakers have included Priya Shahani of Monarch Joint Venture, Jessica Miller from Mosquito Hill Nature Center, Chip Taylor of Monarch Watch, Tom Barnes of the University of Kentucky, Jim Reinartz of the University of Wisconsin — Milwaukee Cedarburg Bog Field Station and Rob Zimmer of the *Appleton Post Crescent*. We've also had a special performance by ballerina Gwynedd Vetter-Drusch of Moving for Monarchs.

Places to Visit

Along with the WILD Center, you can also visit: the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), Miller Brewing Company, Lambeau Field and Miller Park.

The best nature areas: International Crane Foundation, Horicon Marsh, Cathedral of the Pines, Lake Michigan Shoreline and bluffs over the Mississippi River.

The best hiking and biking trails: Elroy-Sparta, Friendship Trestle Trail, and much much more.

Please give us your comments and ideas and help this be the *best* annual conference.

Send your ideas and thoughts for workshops to marketing@wildones.org



The conference weekend includes national board meetings, Wild Ones annual member meeting, chapter development workshops, speaker presentations and lots of networking and great food. Plus you can check out the local flora and fauna at the WILD Center.

Included in this year's workshop agenda will be:

- Citizen science training with Karen Oberhauser of Monarch Joint Venture and Monarch Larva Monitoring Project
- Managing and strategizing for social media
- Transitioning new board members
- Creating a speaker bureau
- Developing a Financial Plan and Budget

This year's special speaker will be: Bill Berry, author of *Banning DDT: How Citizens Activists in Wisconsin Led the Way* (See ad on page 19)

[Copies of Bill's book are available at the Wild Store. Get your copy before the annual conference so you can be prepared to ask him in-depth questions about Lorrie and the rest of that little band of citizen activists.]

It started with Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Then Lorrie Otto and CNRA — This little band of citizen activists with the help of citizens from around the world brought the misuse of this

chemical to the national stage, which led to the first Earth Day, the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the eventual banning nationally of DDT and the founding of Wild Ones. Bill will tell us more about Lorrie and her role in banning DDT which eventually led to the founding of Wild Ones.



Learn. Share. Join Us!



Chapter Anniversaries

- 2 years – Blue Ridge (VA)
- 3 years – Tennessee Valley (TN)
- 9 years – Mountain Laurel (CT)
- 11 years – Habitat Gardening
in Central New York (NY)
- 14 years – Door County (WI)
- 15 years – Gibson Woods (IN)
- 15 years – Southeast Michigan (MI)
- 16 years – Oakland (MI)
- 19 years – Ann Arbor (MI)
- 21 years – Columbus (OH)
- 21 years – Rock River Valley (IL)
- 36 years – Milwaukee-North (WI)

Mark Your Calendars

May 17, 2015

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For information about
starting a chapter in your area:
[wildones.org/connect/
chapter-start-up-information/](http://wildones.org/connect/chapter-start-up-information/)

The Meeting Place

The mailing label on the WILD ONES JOURNAL and other mailed communications to Wild Ones members tell you which chapter you belong to and the date your membership expires.

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PHOTO: Laura Hedien



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Business & Affiliate Members *continued from page 19*

Frankfort Square Park District

7540 W Braemar Ln
Frankfort, IL 60423
jarvia@fspd.org
Will County Chapter

Friends of the Cumberland Trail

220 Park Rd
Caryville, TN 37714
www.friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org
<http://www.friendsofthecumberlandtrail.org>
friendsofthect@gmail.com
Tennessee Valley Chapter

The Giving Gardens

2950 Bonnell Ave SE
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margaux@m Drake.com
River City – Grand Rapids Area Chapter

Heckrodt Wetland Reserve

1305 Plank Rd
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In memory of Tom Barnes

HQ & WILD CENTER DEVELOPMENT

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Sue & Robert Kinde, Fox Valley Area (WI)
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Announcing the Wild Ones 2015 Photo Contest

The deadline for the Wild Ones
Photo Contest has changed.
All photos must be submitted by
4:00 pm, **June 20, 2015.**



Photo by Judy Peters



Photo by Valerie Lindeman

This makes it possible for us to announce the winners at the Wild Ones Annual Conference in August.



Photo by John Meyland

See wildones.org for details.