

A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a cluster of bright orange flowers. The bee is positioned in the center, facing right, with its wings and fuzzy body clearly visible. The flowers are small and numerous, arranged in a dense cluster. The background consists of green leaves, some of which are slightly out of focus.

# Wild Ones

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

FALL 2020 • *Journal* • VOL. 33, NO. 3

*A voice for the natural landscaping movement.  
Working toward the next four decades of growing native plants  
and restoring natural landscapes.*

## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT



We're busy at my house putting up fall crops for winter, and so is wildlife. The bounty of prairie seeds, acorns, nuts, grapes and more are being cached to endure winter's chill. Migrating birds sweep in for insects and fall fruits to fatten up for the demands of long-distance travel.

Thank goodness for the constancy of nature's seasons, especially in the time of COVID-19. We hope you are staying healthy, getting out into your garden or on the trail where nature's gifts can heal us.

Wild Ones members have my thanks for being so resilient, steady and adaptable, joining together for things like online plant sales, garden tours and

webinar programs. Wild Ones is growing with your efforts. Thank you!

The national Board of Directors has been busy this summer. Soon, professionally designed residential landscape plans for six major Wild Ones regions will be available online, funded by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. We've also added an Honorary Director: pollinator and native plant educator and author, Heather Holm of Minnesota. Be sure to sign up for her future webinar on Sept. 24.

We have also been listening to member concerns related to Black Lives Matter, looking into how Wild Ones can be more far-reaching in our communities. "Wild Ones for All" is the first step we've taken by updating our Core Values.

The WILD Center now has a conservation easement monitoring plan and policy, and a prescribed prairie burn is scheduled for spring. With the help of the Fox Valley Area Chapter, added pollinator resources are planned.

Board members toil to keep Wild Ones sustainable and flourishing. We've worked to have solid financial management, organized and secured our records, updated position papers and governance documents, and continue to solve technology and administrative concerns. For staffing, we have planned, supervised and hired staff for improved communications, technology and members services. Soon, there will be an executive director and financial manager to join the Wild Ones team. We are delighted to announce the hiring of the new Mission Manager, Katie Huebner. With a track record of developing electronic communications and promotions, she will enhance and coordinate Wild Ones programs and initiatives that support our mission. Welcome Katie!

After 12 years as a Board Director, we wish to express our appreciation to Karen Syverson for her steadfast support of Wild Ones as Board secretary, nominations chair, Seeds for Education judge and chair of the Governance Committee. Prior to the national board, she was a chapter president. Her hard work and dedication will be missed.

We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on Sept. 19 at 10 a.m. CDT where you will hear reports on membership, technology, programs and finances. You'll also get a chance to preview the new regional landscape designs. To attend the virtual meeting, email [Zoom@wildones.org](mailto:Zoom@wildones.org) for the link.

Finally, don't forget to reserve your free ticket for Heather Holm's webinar, "*The Bombus Among Us*," on Sept. 24.

— Denise Gehring, Interim National President



NATIVE PLANTS. NATURAL LANDSCAPES

Promoting environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities

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Established in 1977, Wild Ones is a national not-for-profit organization of members who teach the benefits of growing native plants and work together to grow and restore natural landscapes.

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.

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## Mark Your Calendar

### SEPTEMBER

Sept. 19

10 a.m. CDT

#### Wild Ones Annual Membership Meeting

Join us to celebrate Lorrie Otto's 101 birthday! Meet the Wild Ones Board of Directors and staff. Preview the new professionally designed residential native garden plans funded by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust grant, and learn how Wild Ones is growing. If you are interested in sharing two or three photos of chapter projects during the meeting, please email [VP@wildones.org](mailto:VP@wildones.org) by Sept. 10.

To attend the Annual Meeting, email [Zoom@wildones.org](mailto:Zoom@wildones.org) for your Zoom link.

Sept. 1-Nov. 1

#### Member Entries Due for the Wild Ones Digital Photo Contest.

Entries must be submitted online at: [wildones.org/photocontest](http://wildones.org/photocontest). Categories include Flora, Scenery, Pollinators, Natural Landscaping, Wild Ones Projects and Photos by Kids.

Sept. 24

6:30 p.m. CDT

#### Wild Ones Honorary Director webinar

Heather Holm presents "The Bombus Among Us." Space is limited; [sign up now](#) for this free program.

### OCTOBER

Oct. 27

#### Monarch Conservation webinar

1 p.m. CDT

Sponsored by the Monarch Joint Venture and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Conservation Training Center.

### NOVEMBER

Nov. 16

#### Wild Ones Photo Contest winners announced!

Nov. 17

#### National Take a Hike Day

Enjoy the fresh air and take in the last of the fall colors along the trail.

### DECEMBER

Dec. 1

#### Giving Tuesday

Consider making a tax-deductible gift to support a Wild Ones outreach project like Seeds for Education on this global day of generosity.

### CHAPTER ANNIVERSARIES

Milwaukee-North, Wisconsin	41 years
Columbus, Ohio	26 years
Rock River Valley, Illinois	26 years
Ann Arbor, Michigan	24 years
Gibson Woods, Indiana	20 years
Door Peninsula, Wisconsin	19 years
Habitat Gardening in Central New York, New York	16 years
Mountain Laurel, Connecticut	14 years
Tennessee Valley, Tennessee	8 years
Blue Ridge, West Virginia	7 years
Fernwood, Michigan	1 year
St. Charles Area, Missouri	1 year

### IN MEMORIAM

Tim Lewis

Rock River Valley Chapter, Illinois

## Journal wins award for excellence

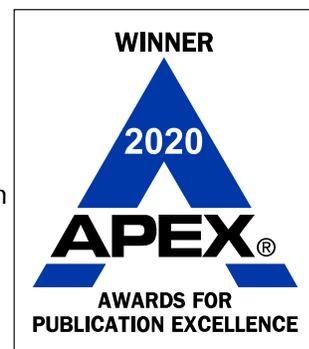
The Wild Ones *Journal* and its staff received a top award for its excellence in graphic design, editorial content and in achieving overall communications effectiveness and excellence.

The *Journal* received the 2020 APEX Award of Excellence in the Magazines/Journals/Tabloids – Green category. About 240 publications entered that category.

Barbara A. Schmitz is the editor of the *Journal*, Kevin Rau is the graphic designer and Denise Gehring is proofreader. Many of the stories used in the *Journal* are written by Wild Ones members.

This is the first year that the *Wild Ones Journal* has entered such a competition, and past president Janice Hand coordinated the entry process.

Hand explained why she submitted the *Journal* for an award. "Our *Journal* is spectacular," she said. "It seemed important to me that those who create it for Wild Ones receive the recognition that should come from doing an incredible job. Not only do we know how good it is, but now the wider world knows!"



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# NEWS

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A C R O S S   T H E   N A T I O N

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## Arizona

Nearly three years after it won endangered species status, the Sonoyta mud turtle was granted 12.3 acres of protected habitat in June, but supporters worry that that habitat may no longer provide all the protection the turtles need.

The Tucson Weekly reported the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated an area in the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument area protected. But that habitat bumps right against the U.S.-Mexico border, where one expert said construction crews “are pulling huge amounts of water out of the aquifer” to work on the border wall.

Critics worry that the pumping will eventually cause the Quitobaquito springs to fail. “When that happens, then that’s it. The aquatic habitat dries up and the turtles will die,” said Randy Serraglio, southwest conservation advocate for the Center for Biological Diversity.

There are only about 150 Sonoyta mud turtles believed to remain in Pima County, the only place in the U.S. where the endangered animal currently exists. The only other place where they have been found is in Sonora, Mexico, where four populations are known to exist.



There may be as few as 150 Sonoyta mud turtles left in Pima County, Arizona. The turtle is found only in Quitobaquito Springs in Arizona and in scattered pockets in northern Sonora state in Mexico.

## Kentucky

“Wildflowers and Ferns of Kentucky” is now available free to download.

At more than 300 pages long, the book helps to teach readers to identify and appreciate Kentucky wildflowers and ferns by matching photographs and leaf line drawings to more than 650 species of flowers covered in its pages. Plants are grouped by flower color and blooming season, and each species includes the plant’s common and scientific name, plant family, habitat, frequency and distribution throughout Kentucky.

Its authors include Thomas G. Barnes, an extension professor of forestry and wildlife specialist at the University of Kentucky, and former naturalist S. Wilson Francis, who is park superintendent at Natural Bridge State Resort Park in Kentucky.

## Ohio

Ohio became one of the first states to pass a law for a recurring Native Plant Month. April was Ohio’s first official month, and the state promoted the use of native plants and the elimination of invasive plants in yards.

Ohio Wildflower Month was instituted last year due to the advocacy efforts of Hope Taft, former Ohio Governor’s First Lady, who is a Dayton Wild Ones member.

If you’d like tips on how to make this a law in your state, email [nancylinz13@gmail.com](mailto:nancylinz13@gmail.com).

## Wisconsin

A rare northern carnivorous plant last documented in Ashland County along with 59 never-before-seen populations of other rare plants in Wisconsin are among discoveries made by volunteers of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources’ Rare Plant Monitoring Program last year. Their discoveries are featured in the program’s recently released annual report.

Wisconsin has 2,366 native plant species and 344, or 14.5% of the total, are considered rare, meaning they are listed as endangered, threatened or special concern. Sixty trained volunteers dispatched to locations around the state last year submitted over 250 reports of rare plants they found, including 59 populations in areas of Wisconsin where they have not been documented before.

“These new discoveries are very exciting,” said Kevin Doyle, a DNR Natural Heritage Conservation botanist who coordinates the program. “They help increase our understanding of the number and locations of rare plant species so we can better monitor and protect them.”

The Badger State now leads the nation in the number of annual bluebird fledglings, according to Patrick Ready, president of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wisconsin (BRAW).

As recently as the 1960s, the eastern bluebird population had declined by 90% in its historic range east of the Rocky Mountains during the preceding 50 years. Wisconsin had about 600 Eastern bluebirds left about that point.

But thanks to human help and optimal weather patterns, BRAW members now counted over 32,000 bluebirds fledging.



# FALL PLANTING: Opportunity Knocking?

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There is very little argument that fall is an excellent time of year to plant trees and shrubs, but how about forbs and grasses?

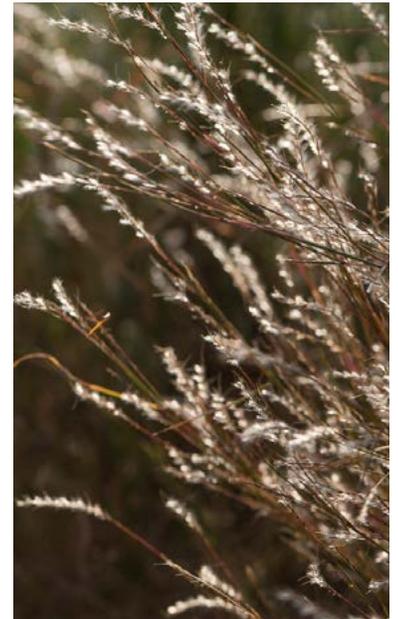
Unlike woody plants, herbaceous plants can lose up to 75% of their root mass over winter. This can affect the success of some plants depending on how late in the season they are installed and how robust their root systems are at the time. One concern, as you approach first frost, is that if the roots haven't had time to establish, the upcoming freeze/thaw cycles might heave the plants out of the soil. This can easily be overcome by burying the roots 1" or so deeper than conventional wisdom would dictate.

The benefits of fall planting, however, can far outweigh the risks. It is an opportunity to edit your garden while the patterns and your plant combinations are still obvious as are any gaps or bare patches. It is also a good time to identify which species have been struggling in a given spot, which ones have become overly enthusiastic, and make adjustments

Then there is the advantage of reduced maintenance. As the weather cools and fall rains increase in frequency, the need for supplemental watering is eliminated. And, should the conditions become adverse, it is less likely to impact the plants' long term health because they will simply enter early dormancy as a survival mechanism.

Lastly, fall installations give plants a head start for the following growing season, and take the guesswork out of deciding how early is too early to plant in spring. Your plants will emerge according to their biological clock and are far less likely to suffer from unanticipated freezes.

Although you lose some of the instant gratification with fall plantings, there is something to be said about planning ahead so that you can sit back and enjoy watching your new plants come to life in spring.



*Schizachyrium scoparium*  
(little bluestem)





# Member Garden

Nora & Bob Bernhardt  
Tennessee Valley (Tennessee) Chapter

All photos courtesy  
Nora & Bob Bernhardt

Nora Bernhardt says she is a citizen scientist at heart. For years, she has taken photos and journaled her observations about native plants, including bloom times and weather patterns.

She now shares those observations with members of the Tennessee Valley (Tennessee) chapter of Wild Ones through bloom time charts for sun and shade native plants, which are available on the [chapter website](#).

*Editor's Note: We'd like to feature native gardens, large or small, in upcoming issues. If you're interested in sharing your native garden, send four to six high-resolution photos, as well as a brief description, to [barbara.a.benish@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.a.benish@gmail.com) or [journal@wildones.org](mailto:journal@wildones.org). Please include your contact information so we can get in touch with you.*

Marginal wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*) and goatsbeard (*Aruncus dioicus*) line the walkway to the Bernhardt home.

"The pandemic and stay-at-home order this spring provided a great opportunity to be in the garden, and to photograph and pay even closer attention to the rich activity that is happening," says Nora, who is marketing committee chair for her chapter. "I majored in biology in college, and observing things has always been an important way for me to learn."

Nora not only journals, keeping track of bloom dates by species and year, but she also takes photographs, which correlate to the journal dates. She says she has noticed differences in bloom times based on rain and heat.

Their property on Walden's Ridge is in the Appalachian Plateau physiographic province. The area is characteristically made up of sandstone,

siltstone and shale, and is covered by mostly well-drained, acid soils of low fertility. An average of 57 inches of rain falls each year and contributes to high biodiversity in the region.

Nora moved to Tennessee in 2006 when she and her husband, Bob, married. Since she had enjoyed gardening in the past, in 2009 she took the local Master Gardener course, which focused on "traditional" gardening.

"At the time, there was no formal instruction available about local native plants, but someone in the Master Gardener classes mentioned that native plants often require less water and maintenance," Nora says. "This seemed like a responsible way to garden in the face of climate change, so I began asking others about native plants."

## About the Yard

- The Nora and Bob Bernhardt property is located on Signal Mountain in the Chattanooga metropolitan area, and is part of Walden's Ridge in Southeastern Tennessee.
- Their 1.3-acre property is about ¼ mile from the escarpment marking the eastern edge of the Cumberland Plateau. To the east of Walden's Ridge are the Ridge-and-Valley Appalachians and the Tennessee River.
- The Bernhardts have more than 250 varieties of native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants present.
- They also have added an outdoor sculpture, bird baths, a hammock and several seating areas to encourage them to linger and relax.
- Some areas at the back of the property have been left "unlandscaped" although invasive vinca and English ivy were removed and wood chip trails were added so that they can explore and observe these more natural areas.

No one had much information at the time, so Nora emailed the Master Gardener interns, asking if others were interested in starting a group to learn about native plants together. Two others responded, including Sally Wencel, who is now on the national Wild Ones Board of Directors and serves as the Tennessee Valley chapter vice president. By 2010, the group had formed the Chattanooga Native Plant and Wildflower Group under the Master Gardener umbrella.

That group met, hosted speakers and grew quickly. In 2012, the group voted to become the Tennessee Valley Chapter of Wild Ones, which is now the largest Wild Ones chapter in the U.S.

The Bernhardts' property on Signal Mountain is characteristic of an oak-hickory forest woodland, and as such, the forest canopy is dominated by white and scarlet oaks and pignut hickories, as well as a number of black cherry, red maple and Virginia pine trees.

As Nora's involvement in the Wild Ones chapter continued, she planted small clusters of native



The Bernhardts had a great view from their bedroom window of this male pileated woodpecker and its babies.

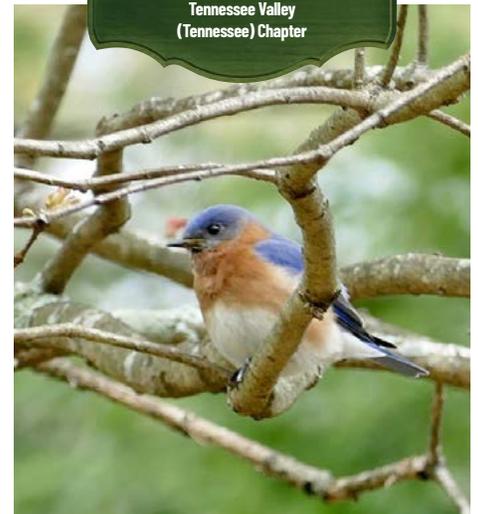
plants in various locations on their woodland property. But in 2014, she decided to intentionally invest in their garden so that it could be a location to show others how to garden with native plants. She hired a landscape architect to come up with a formal plan.

"We wanted to remove the small area of turf grass that still existed and have a nearly 100% native plant garden that was welcoming to wildlife, but did not look disorganized and weedy," Nora says. But they also asked the landscaper to include "formal" planting areas, along with "natural" woodland areas and "garden rooms."

In spring 2015, they began working to implement the landscape plan,

## Member Garden

Nora & Bob Bernhardt  
Tennessee Valley  
(Tennessee) Chapter



The eastern bluebird is commonly found in open woodlands, farmlands, orchards and the Bernhardt yard.

initially focusing on the more visible areas of the property in the front and around the house. Invasive plants and many nonnative shrubs, lilies and hostas were removed. Some of

## Member Garden

Nora & Bob Bernhardt  
Tennessee Valley  
(Tennessee) Chapter



Above: Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) and Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*) line a pathway on the Bernhardt property. Right: a male bluebird feeds its young.

the natives already planted in the landscape (*Itea virginica*, *Fothergilla major*, *Clethra alnifolia*) were moved to locations specified on the landscape plan. They installed new stone walkways, a terrace area around the house and a stone meditation labyrinth.

The tree and shrub layer was the first planting priority, Nora says. Since they already had many large and established trees, they decided to add just a few interesting specimen trees, such as fringe tree (*Chiocyanthus virginicus*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) and addition-

al redbuds (*Cercis canadensis*) and dogwoods (*Cornus florida*).

New shrubs, suitable for the shade garden, included evergreens to create structure, such as rhododendrons (*R. catawbiense* and *R. maximum*), mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) and American holly (*Ilex opaca*), as well as flowering deciduous varieties, such as mountain azalea (*Rhododendron canescens*), flame azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*), sweetshrub (*Calycanthus floridus*) and viburnums (*V. dentatum*, *V. nudum*, *V. rufidulum*).

In fall 2015, the Bernhards began adding perennial plugs for the herbaceous seasonal and groundcover layers. Seasonal plants included celandine poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*), Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), Eastern columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis* L.) woodland asters and others. Groundcover

Eastern box turtles are common visitors to the Bernhardt property. Nora and Bob know the turtles so well that they can identify which ones return year after year.





**Member Garden**  
 Nora & Bob Bernhardt  
 Tennessee Valley  
 (Tennessee) Chapter

Left: Red oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*), left, and yellow threadleaf bluestar (*Amsonia hubrichtii*), right, provide color into the fall. Right: A juvenile blue jay calls for its parents on the Bernhardt property.

plants included several varieties of sedges and ferns, wild ginger (*Asarum canadense* L.), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and Solomon's plume (*Maianthemum racemosum*). A pollinator garden was added along the woodland edge, located in front of a fence along the street, providing three seasons of color and a nectar source for birds and insects.

Nora says they paid attention to planting for all seasons, ensuring something would be blooming continuously. She enjoys watching wildlife on her pesticide-free property. Their gardens are home to Eastern box turtles, butterflies and other pollinating insects, toads, frogs and even a spotted salamander.

Pileated, red-bellied, hairy and downy woodpeckers visit regularly, as well as red-shouldered hawks, bluebirds and numerous songbirds.

"This spring, we were lucky to be able to observe from a bedroom window a pair of pileated woodpeckers nesting and raising their chicks in a dead oak tree snag," she says. "I couldn't stay away from the window to watch them."

The process of creating a natural landscape and letting nature happen has been a great learning experience, Bernhardt says.

"We look forward to our plants maturing, multiplying, moving, transitioning and filling in the woodland, and we welcome the evolution and always-changing nature of the landscape," she says. "Sometimes I feel like our garden has become a native plant 'nursery' of sorts, because many of our plants are so plentiful that they are now being adopted and finding good homes with new native plant gardeners in our area."

Her advice to new gardeners is to start small.

"It can be overwhelming if you don't," she says. "Pick a spot that is manageable and view it as an experiment. Try out a few things and you'll start to learn what works..."

Nora says it's important for Wild Ones members to be the change that they want to see happen.

"I try to lead by example," she says. "I invite people to walk around (my gardens). I have labels on most plants so visitors can see plant names, and if they like a plant, they



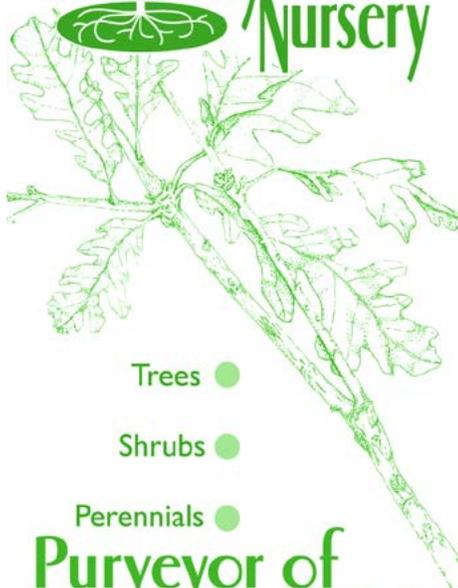
A pearl crescent butterfly on frost aster (*Symphoricarpon pilosum*).

can add it to their own yard. I have always viewed our garden as an opportunity to teach."

And that includes teaching people about the benefits of natural landscaping, including that it is a low maintenance, pesticide-free way to garden.

"You don't need fertilizers, you don't need to mulch and you don't have to water as much if you layer plants that are suited for the place that you live," she says. "Yes, there will be selective pruning and weeding required to manage the garden. But native plant gardening is a truly important and responsible action that each one of us can take to live in harmony with nature and to heal and protect our environment."

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# A hillside respite: Jenkins Arboretum



By Matthew Ross

In the last edition of the *Wild Ones Journal* I shared the mission of the North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill and a few images of its beauty. As part of our ongoing appreciation for native gardens in the world of public gardens, it is my pleasure to highlight another leading public garden promoting the use of native plants.

All photos by Matthew Ross



Residing in Devon, Pennsylvania among over 35 gardens in the heart of America's Garden Capital, [Jenkins Arboretum](#) is home to one of the nation's most underrated collections of native plants. Their mission is to "preserve natural tranquil woodlands for community enjoyment, to showcase native plants and a world class collection of rhododendrons and azaleas and to promote environmental horticulture through learning, research and conservation."

The tranquility of strolling through the 15-acre hillside and gardens provide a respite for visitors who feel unaware that they are only a few miles away from a shopping mecca and only a quick drive from downtown Philadelphia. I have had the pleasure of visiting the gardens on several occasions. While I must admit that experiencing the majesty of the vast array of azaleas and rhododendrons in peak bloom nearly brought tears to my eyes, it is the

diversity of understory plants that has continued to pique my interest in the garden.

It doesn't take long to realize that the garden is situated on top a significant slope with winding pathways, allowing for an exciting perspective on the smaller forbs, grasses and groundcovers that create a tapestry beneath the canopy and diverse azalea plantings. There is a plethora of plants from trout lilies (*Erythronium americanum*) and pockets of native



orchids in the spring, to the thick stems of bugbane (*Actaea racemosa*) in the heat of the summer so there's a variable look to the slope throughout the year. At the bottom of the slope is a peaceful pond and meandering stream highlighting native aquatic plants, especially goldenclub (*Orontium aquaticum*) that float along the edge of the pond, and one of the most impressive specimens of buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) I have ever seen.

The gardens have evolved over the past 100 years when they were a private residence. Opened to the public in 1976, Tom Smarr was hired in 2019 as the third director of the gardens. He previously worked at the Rose Kennedy Greenway, Gardens in the Woods, was the head of horticulture at The High Line, and most recently as the executive director of Parklands in Louisville,

Kentucky. Smarr brings unparalleled design expertise and a fantastic perspective on native plants in the built environment. I look forward to seeing how the gardens will develop under his direction, and how the prominence of Jenkins Arboretum will go beyond their nationally accredited Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia*) and Rhododendron collections to impact the greater discussion of the role of native plants in suburban ecology.

Free and open to the public, the gardens are a place to truly investigate as a leader in promoting native plants in the landscape.

*Matthew Ross is the coordinator of continuing education at Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, is a Wild Ones Partner-at-Large and has served on the national board since 2017.*



Top: Perched high atop of the hills of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Jenkins provides a great vantage point to see the surrounding canopy beyond the dense understory. Above: Strolling through the woodlands of Jenkins Arboretum during the peak of spring bloom is an ethereal experience.

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# Plant a native tree to help bring forth a greener future, more birds in your yard

by Heather McCargo

Planting a native tree is a powerful act that directly benefits local wildlife, moderates ground temperature and helps remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Since the dawn of agriculture, people have been cutting trees and replacing forests with farmland. More recently, sprawling urban centers have displaced millions of acres of woodland. With a warming climate and increased urbanization, planting native trees, especially in our neighborhoods, is an action that each of us can do to stop the loss of biodiversity and counter the negative effects of climate change.

While all plants are impressive (after all, the process of photosynthesis is the reason that you and I are able to exist!), trees are perhaps the most amazing because of their size, beauty and stature. Trees rise above all other plants, their trunks and leafy branches reaching skyward, creating a tremendous amount of habitat for a multitude of animal species. Woodlands create a protective canopy above the earth, regulating temperature, moisture and nutrient cycles. Trees also store carbon in their mass, capture and recycle rainwater, and shade and protect the earth with their roots and leaf litter.

A majestic oak tree's branches reach to the sky. Oak species are one of the top providers of food for birds.

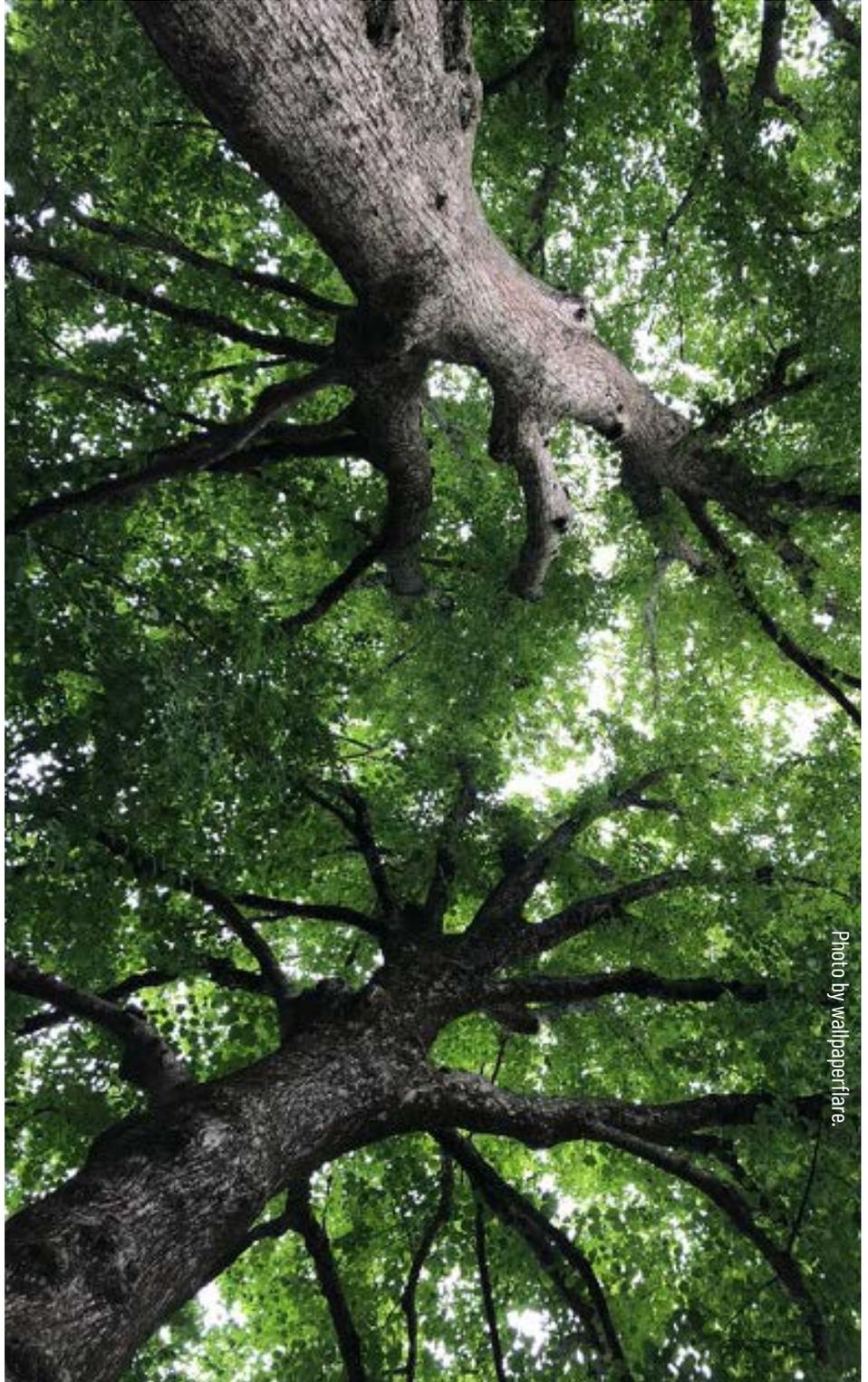


Photo by wallpaperflare.



Photo by John Bright/Flickr

### Large native trees to plant

Below is list of some canopy trees native to the eastern half of the country that are deserving of space in our landscape. Imagine the collective impact if each of us could plant one of these trees in our yard, street, school, business, parking lot or neighborhood park.

- Maple: red, silver and sugar (*Acer rubrum\**, *A. saccharinum\**, *A. saccharum*)
- Birch: paper, yellow, sweet (*Betula populifolia*, *B. alleghaniensis*, *B. lenta*)
- Shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*)
- American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*)
- Beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)
- Ash (*Fraxinus americana*)
- Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*)
- Black tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica\**)
- Spruce (*Picea rubra*, *P. glauca*)
- Pine (*Pinus strobus*, *P. resinosa*, *P. rigida*)
- American sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
- Poplar (*Populus grandidentata*)
- Black cherry (*Prunus serotina\**)
- Elm (*Ulmus americana\**)

- Oak (*Quercus alba\**, *Q. rubra*, *Q. prinus*, *Q. velutina*, *Q. coccinea\**, *Q. macrocarpa\**, *Q. bicolor*)
- Black willow (*Salix nigra*)
- Basswood (*Tilia americana*)
- Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)

Species marked with an asterisk are tolerant of tough urban and roadside conditions such as compacted soil and salt spray and are excellent candidates for neighborhood street trees. Other species will thrive in yards and large green spaces.

### A note about invasive pests

A few of the species listed above are currently being attacked by invasive pests. Most species are eventually able to overcome pests as long as there is enough genetic diversity within the population. It is important to keep sowing seeds of these species and remain hopeful that resistant individuals will reproduce to carry that species into the future. Butternut, American chestnut and American elm can now be purchased in blight-free forms.

### Small trees to plant

Don't just think that you should

A male cardinal on a maple tree in early spring.

only plant large trees. A small tree can bring beauty and diversity into your yard while taking up very little space. One could be planted next to your doorway, in the narrow strip between the sidewalk and street, in the garden bed by your patio or even in a large pot on your deck. The woody trunk and branches will provide visual interest and habitat for wildlife throughout the year in a way that flowers and groundcovers cannot.

Before choosing a tree for your location, take the time to determine your site conditions and match them to the plant requirements:

- Is the planting location in full sun, a half-day sun or shade?
- Is the soil sandy, gravelly, clay or a mixture of these? Does it have any organic matter such as decayed leaves (like in a forest)?
- Is the soil moist and friable, or compacted like cement? Compacted soil is a manmade condition that must be remedied with a digging fork to allow water into the tree roots.



# Want birds in your yards? Then plant natives for caterpillars

By Barbara A. Schmitz

If Doug Tallamy has said it once, he's probably said it a million times: If you want birds to breed in your backyard, you need to first attract caterpillars. And if you want caterpillars in your yard, you need to include native plants.

Tallamy, a Wild Ones Lifetime honorary director and author of "*Bringing Nature Home*," "*Nature's Best Hope*" and "*The Living Landscape*," the latter which Tallamy co-wrote with Rick Darke, said the key to getting specific birds to your backyard is knowing what they eat. Then you need to make sure that you provide that "food."

"Most people think chickadees eat seed, but they only feed their young caterpillars and other insects," said Tallamy, who is also a professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware. "So if you don't have caterpillars in your backyard, you won't have any breeding chickadees either."

And you don't need just a few caterpillars in your yard. You need **a lot**.

"A breeding chickadee will feed its young 390-570 caterpillars a day," he said. "When you multiply that by the 16 days before they leave the nest, that's between 6,000 and 9,000 caterpillars, depending on the number of chicks in the nest."

Similarly, most people think hummingbirds eat mainly nectar. But 80% of their diet is insects and spiders, Tallamy said. So if you want hummingbirds in your yard, you need insects there, too.

So how do you get caterpillars and other insects in your yards? You include native flowers, shrubs and trees in your landscape that the caterpillars and other insects need. But you need the right plants since 90% of insects that eat plants can develop and reproduce only on the plants with which they share an evolutionary past, Tallamy said.

Nonnative species just aren't as effective. Nonnative ornamentals, on average, support 29 times fewer insects than do native ornamentals, he said, and native plants will produce 22 times more caterpillars than nonnative plants. That's because caterpillars, a particularly important food source for birds, are especially picky about what they feed on and will seldom feed on nonnative species.

Does that matter?

"It does if you eat them," Tallamy said. "That means you have 22 times fewer caterpillars to find and you have will 22 times less bird biomass because you've reduced what they eat."

Go to the National Wildlife Federation's [Native Plant Finder](#) to see what plants attract the most wildlife in your area.

## TOP TREES FOR DIVERSITY:

Common Name	Plant Genus	Butterfly/moth species supported
Oak	Quercus	557
Black cherry	Prunus	56
Willow	Salix	455
Birch	Betula	413
Poplar	Populus	368
Crabapple	Malus	311
Maple	Acer	285
Elm	Ulmus	213
Pine	Pinus	203
Hickory	Carya	200

Source: Tallamy and Shropshire 2009

Here are some small trees to consider. They not only have flowers and foliage that support pollinators, but also fruits and seeds to nourish wildlife, leaves in a variety of shapes and shades of green, and diverse bark and branching patterns. And like all native plants, each of these trees support other creatures from our local ecoregion and will help draw them into your home landscape.

- Serviceberry, Shadbush (*Amelanchier canadensis*, *A. laevis*)
- Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
- Beach Plum (*Prunus maritima*)
- Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
- Striped Maple (*Acer pensylvanicum*)
- Smooth Blackhaw (*Viburnum prunifolium*)
- Hawthorn (*Crataegus macrosperma*, *C. crus-galli*)
- American Witch-Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*)
- Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
- Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*, *A. glabra*)

## Purchase a young tree from a nursery or grow your own from seed

When choosing a tree at a nursery, look for trees grown from seed instead of cloned forms. For example, if you want to plant red maple, choose *Acer rubrum* instead of the cultivar *Acer rubrum* "Crimson King." Clones are all from one individual and lack genetic diversity, the basis of resilience (resistance to heat, cold, drought, pollution or pests) in a species.

Winter is a great time of year to let your local nursery know what native plants you want to purchase. Knowledgeable staff are working on their spring orders and can let you know what they plan to have in stock and may even be willing to make a special order for you. Also, look for native plant sales in the spring – many conservation and gardening organizations like Wild Ones host annual events.



(Free photobank torange.biz) / ©torange.biz

Trees can be purchased in pots, ball and burlap (dug with soil and wrapped in cloth), or bare-root (freshly dug from the ground without soil). Winter is the time to order your bare root trees.

Many trees are easy to grow from seed—read my [blog post](#) to learn more on this topic.

### Planting a tree

Before choosing a tree for your location, take the time to determine your site conditions and match them to the tree’s requirements. To create optimum soil conditions for forest species, add a mulch of composted leaves (often available from your town recycling center) or aged hardwood bark. This will help bring back the microorganisms in the soil and hold moisture. In the fall, leave your leaves and resist the urge to rake them away, as this is how nutrients are recycled in the forest and many species of wildlife overwinter in the leaf litter.

Keep in mind that smaller trees are easier to plant than larger ones – younger trees establish themselves more quickly and are much less expensive. Within a couple of years, they will surpass a larger transplanted specimen. Trees can be planted as soon as the ground thaws — the earlier the better to take advantage of spring rains and cooler temperatures for root growth.

Lastly, if you want to plant a street tree in front of your house, check with your local city or town arborist. Offer to plant it yourself, or some cities will help you with street tree planting – just make sure you ask for a native tree and help to care for the tree after it is planted.

For detailed instruction on how to plant a tree, visit the [Arbor Day Foundation](#) website.

No matter if you plant large or small trees, there are many beautiful and resilient plants from the woodland understory of eastern

Birds depend on caterpillars to feed their young. So if you want birds in your backyard, you need to plant native trees and shrubs that attract caterpillars.

North America that can enliven a shady landscape on your property and change your perception about gardening in the shade. There are woody and herbaceous species with delicate blossoms, an array of fruits and seeds, a variety of leaf shapes and colors, and interesting bark or branching patterns. Shady landscapes are easy to care for since they require minimal weeding and watering. In addition they support a host of interesting birds, pollinating insects and small animals, and are lovely places to be on hot days. Clearly, cool shade is something that we will all be needing more of in the coming years.

### Shade-loving plants, where they come from

The Eastern deciduous forest biome that stretches from Canada to Geor-



Consider planting baneberry under your tree canopies.

gia is the world's richest temperate woodland ecosystem with a diverse mix of plants that thrive in the shade of canopy trees. It is in the ground layer of the woodland understory where the most botanical biodiversity resides. Wildflowers, ferns, small shrubs, understory trees and juvenile canopy trees all make a rich tapestry that is beautiful as well as biologically dynamic. Many of these plants are easy to grow and will thrive in shady locations in our urban and suburban landscapes.

### Light levels and mimicking woodland soils

Thinking about how the plants of the forest have adapted to life in the shade will help you choose how to include them in your landscape. Plants that grow under deciduous trees receive more direct and indirect sunlight than plants growing on north-facing slopes or under evergreen trees. From the time they lose their leaves in the fall through mid to late spring when the trees leaf out,

deciduous trees let light through to the forest floor. Many woodland wildflowers bloom in the spring to take advantage of this early season light. Other understory plants manage to capture enough light even in locations with no direct sunlight. These are the plants that can tolerate the immediate north side of a building that is usually in complete shade.

The nature of the woodland soil is another important component when creating a shaded habitat. Every year, the leaves of deciduous trees, shrubs and wildflowers die and return to the soil to decay and provide nutrients and insulation to the soil and its diversity of life (e.g., fungi, microorganisms, insects and small animals). You can mimic this in your shady landscape by adding plenty of organic matter in the form of compost, leaf mold or very well aged natural hardwood bark. In the fall, when the new crop of leaves falls on your beds, leave them. The leaf litter will improve the soil and

provide overwintering habitat for many beneficial creatures such as butterflies, moths, frogs, salamanders and ground nesting birds.

Some native perennials to consider for under your tree canopies:

- Baneberries (*Actaea rubra*, *A. pachypoda*)
- White snakeroot (*Ageratina altissima*)
- Wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*)
- Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*)
- Asters (*Eurybia divaricata*, *Symphotrichum cordifolia*)
- Blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)
- Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*)
- Golden groundsel (*Packera aurea*)
- Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)
- Violets (*Viola* spp.)
- Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- Tall bellflower (*Campanula americana*)
- Wild Bleeding heart (*Dicentra eximia*)
- Eastern shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*)
- Bottle gentians (*Gentiana andrewsii*, *G. clausa*)
- Wood phlox (*Phlox divaricata*, *P. stolonifera*)
- Jacobs-ladder (*Polemonium reptans*)
- Woodland goldenrods (*Solidago caesia*, *S. flexicaulis*)

It is easy to feel despondent at the loss of forests and natural landscapes worldwide – what can one person do? But if each of us can plant a tree, we are taking one step forward. A tree may just be one component of a forest, but even a single native tree will attract a large diversity of other creatures and provide year-round interest and beauty.

*Heather McCargo is a Wild Ones member and founder and executive director of the [Wild Seed Project](#). She is also an educator with 35 years of experience in plant propagation, landscape design, horticulture and conservation. A version of this story originally appeared on her [Wild Seed blog](#).*

# Minnesota chapter creates birding book to expand Wild Ones presence

By Barbara A. Schmitz

It started with a single premise: Gardening and birding are two of the most popular hobbies in the country, so why not target birders and educate them about the benefits of native plants.

"I know birders who will travel the world to see birds, yet they don't understand the value of planting natives to attract and enjoy birds in their own yards," said Marilyn Torkelson, president of the Prairie Edge (Minnesota) chapter of Wild Ones. But it was actually chapter vice president Heather Holm, author of *"Pollinators of Native Plants"* and *"Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide,"* who came up with the idea of creating a booklet detailing what native plants to add to your landscape if you want to attract more birds to your property.

Holm, a new Wild Ones honorary director, said the idea for the booklet came about because she realized they needed a tangible subject matter, other than the monarch butterfly, that would serve as a gateway to native plants.

"Many of my birding friends weren't making the connection between birds and the importance of their habitat," she said. "I thought a booklet would be a good way to introduce another audience to Wild Ones."

Holm also realized that if they were going to create a handout, it needed to be sizable and not a one-page flyer that people would just chuck into the recycling bin.

"We needed to create something that people will keep, a reference that they will keep going back to, or pass it on to others when they're done with it," Holm said.

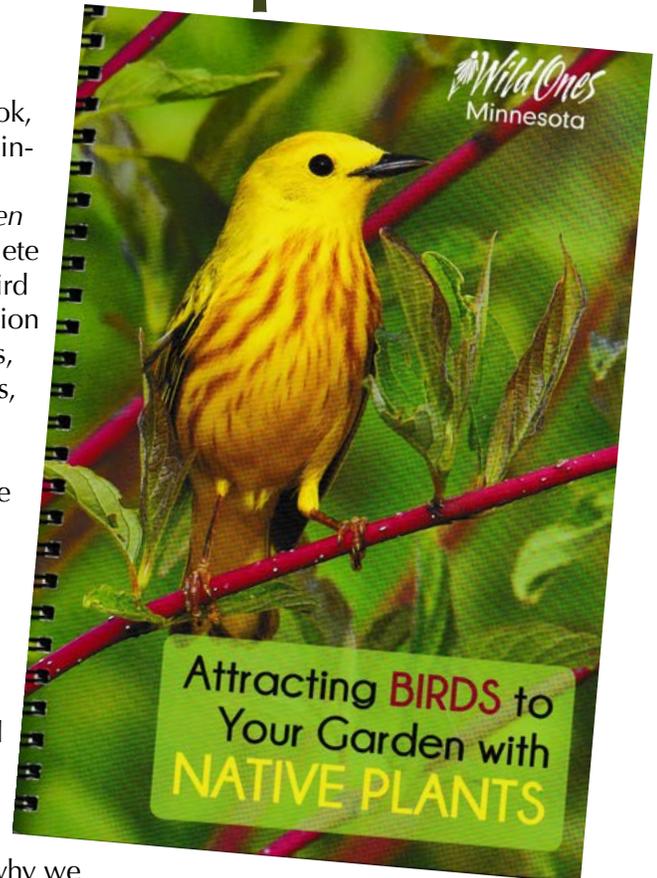
The result is a 40-page spiral-bound, full-color book, produced by Wild Ones Minnesota chapters, titled *"Attracting Birds to Your Garden with Native Plants."* Complete with absolutely stunning bird photos, as well as information on trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses and sedges for birds, as well as additional references, the booklet helps Minnesota residents choose native plants that will provide the most ecological value to birds and other wildlife.

Prairie Edge chapter treasurer Doreen Bower and Torkelson collaborated on writing the first 10 pages, which explains how native plants, insects and birds are interconnected, why we should have less grass in our yards, the importance of choosing straight native plant species vs. cultivars and more. But the entire Prairie Edge chapter board helped with research for the book, confirming things like the mature height of specific trees, what sun exposure or soil moisture is best, and more. Holm did the rest of the writing and designed the booklet.

"We tried to spread the work out a bit," Holm said.

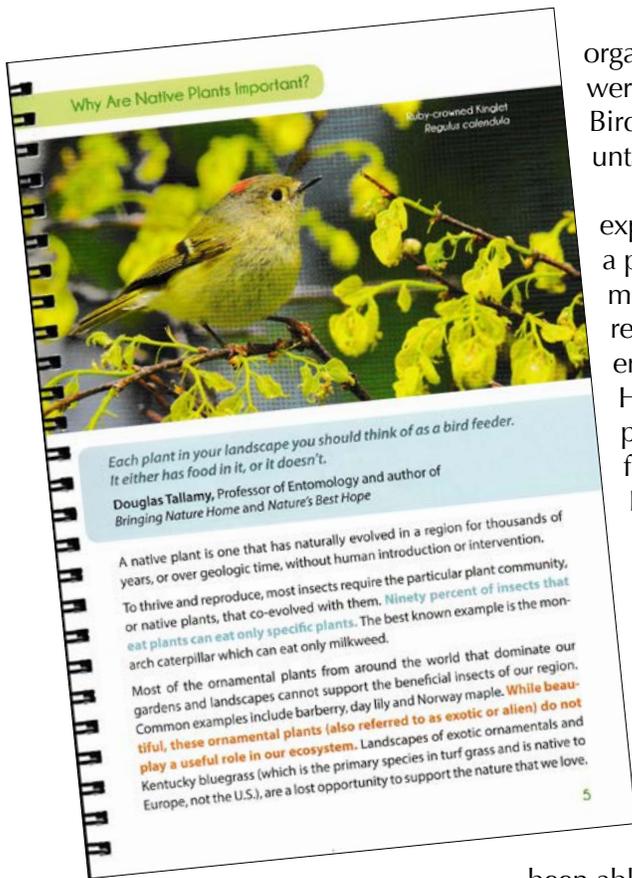
Torkelson said the booklet went together fairly easily, which she attributed to Holm. "Heather is so knowledgeable ... and her talent and vision is what brought this together," she said. "But there was a lot of back and forth between Doreen and me on wording and what was appropriate content. I don't even know how many revisions we went through."

The booklet, from idea to printed



product, took about 1 year to complete, and was done in time for their Design with Nature conference last February.

Funding for printing 7,000 copies of the booklet came from several sources. Due to generous grants from St. Paul Audubon Society, the Bush Lake chapter of the Izaak Walton League and the Minnesota Wild Ones Design with Nature Conference funds, all Minnesota Wild Ones chapters were able to receive the "Attracting Bird" booklets at no charge. The other nine sponsors contributed \$1 per copy with a minimum of an 100 booklet order. The \$1 per booklet sponsorship covered the printing costs plus a little extra for reprinting the "Attracting Birds to Your Garden with Native Plants" booklets and developing future booklets on other topics. All spon-



sors are recognized on the inside front cover of the booklet.

“What really makes this booklet so incredible are the photographs,” Torkelson said. “The indigo bunting on elderberry, the Baltimore orioles on a plum shrub, the yellow warbler nesting ... virtually every plant has a bird interacting with it.”

Holm said the most difficult part of the process was finding those photographs of birds interacting with specific plants. They were lucky to find and partner with photographer Travis Bonovsky, she added.

The most successful part of the project has been seeing how many people and organizations stepped up as sponsors to help pay for the printing and other costs of producing the booklet, or who willingly are distributing it through their stores, organizations and elsewhere, Holm said.

“The real benefit of this is that Wild Ones is getting its name out to the public,” she said. “People are learning about all the Wild Ones chapters in Minnesota, and we’re getting a lot more eyes on our

organization from people who weren’t aware of us before. Birders are just a really good untapped audience.”

Several chapters have expressed an interest in having a presentation based on the materials in the booklet. As a result and thanks to the generosity of the photographers, Holm will be able to use the photographs and information from the booklet to create a PowerPoint presentation that can be used by other Wild Ones chapters.

The preordered copies were distributed during or before their Design with Nature conference, including to all Wild Ones chapters in Minnesota, Torkelson said. Some organizations have not

been able to distribute the booklets at their usual outreach events because of cancellations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other organizations, such as Natural Shore Technologies, Inc., a native plant grower, are giving away a booklet with every plant order, and have already requested and received additional copies of the booklet. Several chapter members are placing copies of the booklet in Little Free Libraries.

Holm and Torkelson said next year they are planning a follow-up booklet about butterflies, which will likely cover the 25 most common butterflies in Minnesota. Holm is hoping Bonovsky will also provide some of the photos for that booklet.

And if they do a third booklet, it will be about the benefits of healthy soil. “I can’t imagine the photos being as appealing as photos of birds, but the importance of healthy soil microbial life for carbon sequestration, water retention and a host of other benefits is an important message to communicate,” Torkelson said.

Holm said the two are brainstorming ways to make a soil booklet more interesting, and that it will likely be more on the broader impact of climate change and how soil and native plants fit into that.

Holm said she encourages other chapters to take on similar projects. Pending final approval from Bonovsky, they’re even willing to give chapters their Adobe InDesign template so all the various chapters would need to do is change the plant palate.

“We don’t want people reinventing the wheel,” she said.

The more chapters that create such a booklet, the more the word about native plants will spread. Just think how easy it would be to expand the number of native plant enthusiasts if Wild Ones can bring onboard birders, gardeners, wildlife enthusiasts, climate change activists and others, Torkelson said. “There are so many reasons to plant native, and we’re not promoting those reasons enough.”

To order copies of “*Attracting Birds to Your Garden with Native Plants*,” go to <https://www.wildonesprairieedge.org/>.



# Holm bee webinar set for September

The Wild Ones will hold its second webinar for members, featuring Wild Ones Honorary Director Heather Holm, who will be presenting *“The Bombus Among Us – Bumble Bee Basics.”* The webinar, available by registration on Eventbrite and presented on Zoom, will begin at 7:30 p.m. EDT on Sept. 24.

Holm is a biologist and author of *“Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide”* and *“Pollinators of Native Plants.”*

Holm will illustrate the bumble bee life cycle through the growing season; the importance of selecting the right native (woody and herbaceous) plants to meet the nutritional needs of the queens, workers and males; their habitat; the impacts on populations from climate change; and common upper Midwestern and eastern bumble bee species. She will also feature species in decline including the federally endangered rusty patched bumble bee.

To register for the free tickets, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/wild-ones-heather-holm-presents-the-bombus-among-us-bumble-bee-basics-tickets-106995185480>.



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# Migrating dragonflies can resemble swarm of locusts



Photo by Loyce Fandrei

Common green darners are most likely to migrate as they are also the most widely distributed dragonfly in the United States.

By Kim Moor

A “swarm migration” of dragonflies is a sight that is impossible to ignore — if you’re lucky enough to be at the right place at the right time. Thousands or millions of these insects fly in one direction, usually toward the southeast, in the fall. They can form a thin sheet of flying bodies, up to a heavy cloud and can be as thick as locusts.

There is little doubt that dragonflies do migrate, but scientists still can’t predict swarm migration reliably enough to pinpoint when and where, or even exactly where they go. This much is known — dragonfly migrations are not like bird migra-

tions, or even exactly like that of monarch butterflies.

For bird migrations, all individuals of a species move south in the fall, then move north in the spring — young and old. In contrast, most individuals of a migrating dragonfly species do not migrate since most are still aquatic larvae when migration occurs.

For those that do migrate, the flight is a one-way trip. In this way, dragonfly migration resembles monarch butterfly migration. The monarch that returns to our region in the spring is a descendant many generations removed from the monarch that left in the fall. Similarly, the drag-

onflies that fly north in the spring are the descendants of those that departed in the fall. Most dragonfly larvae take two years to develop, so those that have migrated north in the spring are off-spring of dragonflies that migrated south at least two years ago!

While the actual migration of the dragonfly resembles that of the monarch, it has more in common with hawk migration. In fact, most of the data on dragonfly migration comes from hawk watchers who have noticed that a good day for watching hawks flying south is usually also a good day for seeing dragonfly migration.

Both hawks and dragonflies are driven by cold fronts in the fall. Both take advantage of air currents and ridgelines. And both tend to cluster in large groups before their migration route passes over a large body of water. This is why Cape May, New Jersey; Long Island, New York and Cape Cod, Massachusetts are hot spots for both large kettles of hawks and large masses of dragonflies.

The chances of seeing a large swarm migration are slimmer in the Midwest because we are missing that large body of water. But swarms have been seen in Chicago coming from Lake Michigan. You might have heard about, or was lucky enough to observe, the Great Chicago Dragonfly Invasion of 2015. Insect populations naturally fluctuate from year to year, but that particular year, several factors came together at once. For one thing, the mosquito population was terribly high that year, and dragonflies eat mosquitoes. Keep in mind that not every swarm of dragonflies is a migrating swam. Dragonflies

sometimes swarm while feeding, and a few species gather to mate.

Dragonfly migration season runs from July to mid-October, with its peak in September. If you see a swarm, it will likely be made mostly of common green darners, which is the most widely distributed dragonfly in the United States and the most frequently reported migrant. Some species need really clean pristine water for their aquatic young. Green darners can cope with a degree of pollution, so they tend to be a species that is more common in our modern environment.

According to the Migratory Dragonfly Partnership, 16 of the 326 dragonfly species in North America are regular migrants, with some making annual seasonal flights while others are more sporadic. Besides green darners, other common migratory species in North America are the wandering glider (*Pantala flavescens*), spot-winged glider (*Pantala hymenaea*), black saddlebags (*Tramea lacerata*) and variegated meadowhawk

(*Sympetrum corruptum*).

A good time to see this phenomenon is a day with a south-moving cold front that covers most of the weather map. Even better is when two big cold fronts come through within a few days of each other, with a north-moving warm front in between them. This weather pattern seems to concentrate the dragonflies, although it's still not a sure bet when it comes to dragonfly migration. The final destination of the migrants is not yet known, though many biologists believe Florida and the southern United States or Mexico are the likely destinations.

Citizen scientists are playing a big role in learning more about dragonfly migration, however. Learn how you can play a part in the Dragonfly Pond Watch Project.

*Kim Moor is vice president and newsletter editor of the Gibson Woods (Indiana) Wild Ones chapter. A version of this article first appeared in their September 2019 newsletter.*

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# Chapter builds community pollinator garden

*Sometimes the way to reinforce one's determination is to tell them—too big, too much, can't be done.*

By Beth Castaldi

In 2017-2018, several members of a local garden club began investigating the possibility of creating a butterfly and pollinator garden in the Antigo, Wisconsin area. This small group met several times a month, drew up plans, secured a location, obtained construction bids and prepared a promotional brochure.

But ultimately, the club realized a butterfly garden was a major undertaking, especially from a financial standpoint. Because the local club's primary focus is for other activities, members decided not to continue with the garden since it was an enormous project.

However, butterfly garden supporters were unwavering in their commitment. While they sincerely

appreciated the early opportunities given them by the local club, they recognized in early 2019 the need to find an organization better suited to their goal.

Avid leader of the nucleus group, Christine Machlem, was in touch with Wild Ones and believed this organization was a perfect fit. Their mission to educate the public regarding the importance of native plants, pollinators and other wildlife was an exact match to the objective of the planned butterfly garden.

Machlem began investigating Wild Ones. She says: "Janet at Wild Ones headquarters was wonderful to work with. She explained all the requirements on how to start a Wild Ones chapter."

Christine and Karen Now

Stimac immediately began steps to organize a local chapter. They called other garden friends who also contacted their friends, who were already knowledgeable about Wild Ones and native plants. Word of mouth passed the info even further. Additionally, they placed an ad in the local newspaper inviting interested people to attend an initial meeting in March. The response was enthusiastic.

Thus, the Wild Ones Northwoods Gateway Chapter based in Antigo, Wisconsin was established on March 25, 2019. How appropriate as Antigo is home to the state soil, Antigo Silt Loam. An announce-

Above: There is no doubt this pollinator garden is meant for butterflies. Its shape gives it away!

ment of the chapter's formation appeared in the local paper. Christine now serves as president, while Karen is vice president.

Members of the newly formed chapter brought a vast array of knowledge and skills with them. Ann Savagain, chapter secretary, explains, "I feel a personal connection with Wild Ones as my mother was acquainted with Loirie Otto, and she inspired Mom to add native plants to her garden, which inspired me to do the same."

The most important characteristic the members brought to the chapter was their willingness to volunteer to make the garden a reality.

Fundraising was and still is paramount. Getting the word out was the key first step. Members made phone calls, mailed letters, had face-to-face conversations, completed grant applications and generated publicity through stories in local newspapers. The Northwoods Gateway Chapter made it clear that donations of any size were welcomed and appreciated. Monetary donations came from individuals, community foundations, businesses and grants, such as the Wisconsin Public Service Foundation, CoVantage Credit Union and Parsons of Antigo. To keep interest piqued, photos of chapter members accepting donations were printed in local papers.

However, not every fundraiser was successful. For instance, a brat fry was scheduled at a local grocery store where clubs have been known to make hundreds of dollars. But not on days when it is pouring rain! It was a complete bust for the Northwoods Chapter. Thankfully, as funds increased, the chapter was fortunate to have a CPA available for accounting and money handling in Treasurer, Mary Turnbull.

In-kind donations have been important contributions to establishing the garden. For instance, Johnson Electric Coil Company owns the

property where the garden is located. Local artist and art teacher, Kim Schoenrock, designed and painted a banner for Northwoods. Additionally, she assisted club members with a colorful sign erected at the garden site announcing its upcoming arrival. A brochure box is included on the sign post for passersby to take.

In approximately one year, the group raised sufficient funds to order materials and begin construction of the garden. COVID-19 and several construction challenges caused some delays, but the garden was completed in early August. Expectations are that the actual planting will begin in late August, with a nearby gardening center offering to provide native plants without charge. The butterfly garden was built using raised blocks in the shape of a butterfly surrounded by a 6-foot wide walkway with benches. A large kiosk with an enclosed area to house educational items and articles related to pollinators and native plants will be erected nearby.

Chapter member Jill Trachte has grown native plants for many years. She will design, select and oversee the planting to provide the most successful display.

As with any group dependent on volunteerism, if they find a personal benefit it serves as a reward and keeps them active. Chapter members benefit from the experience of Julie Rose. Julie is a long-time gardener and belonged to a different Wild Ones chapter for many years. She serves as educational coordinator, sharing information on appropriate books, websites and other educational sources. She organizes presentations at chapter meetings. Upcoming plans include educational presentations for the general public.

The garden is linked to Antigo's popular Springbrook Walking Trail. It is within easy walking distance of two grade schools, a senior residence, hospital, several healthcare

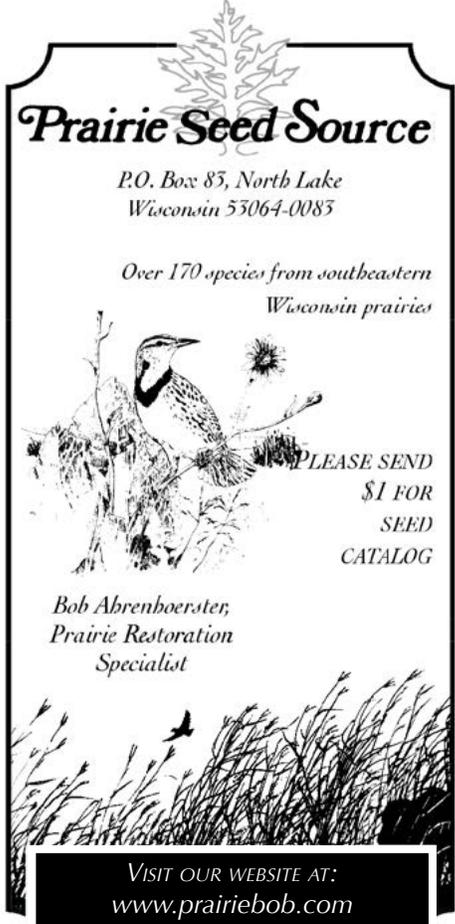
facilities and community baseball fields. Christine is happy to say, "Response from community members has been very positive and they are excited about the addition of the butterfly garden to their environment."

Yes, it was a big project. However, a relatively small but determined group of people made it happen. And they are not done yet.

Machlem adds: "We have so many members with extensive knowledge about pollinators and native plants. It is an honor to have them. I look forward to working with them in the future."

Plans for the immediate future are to add accessible educational signs for people with disabilities, more gardens and trees.

*Beth Castaldi is publicity coordinator of the Wild Ones Northwoods Gateway Chapter based in Antigo, Wisconsin.*



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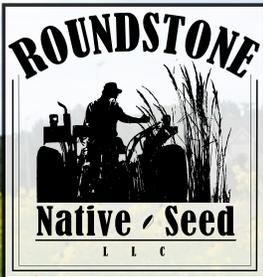
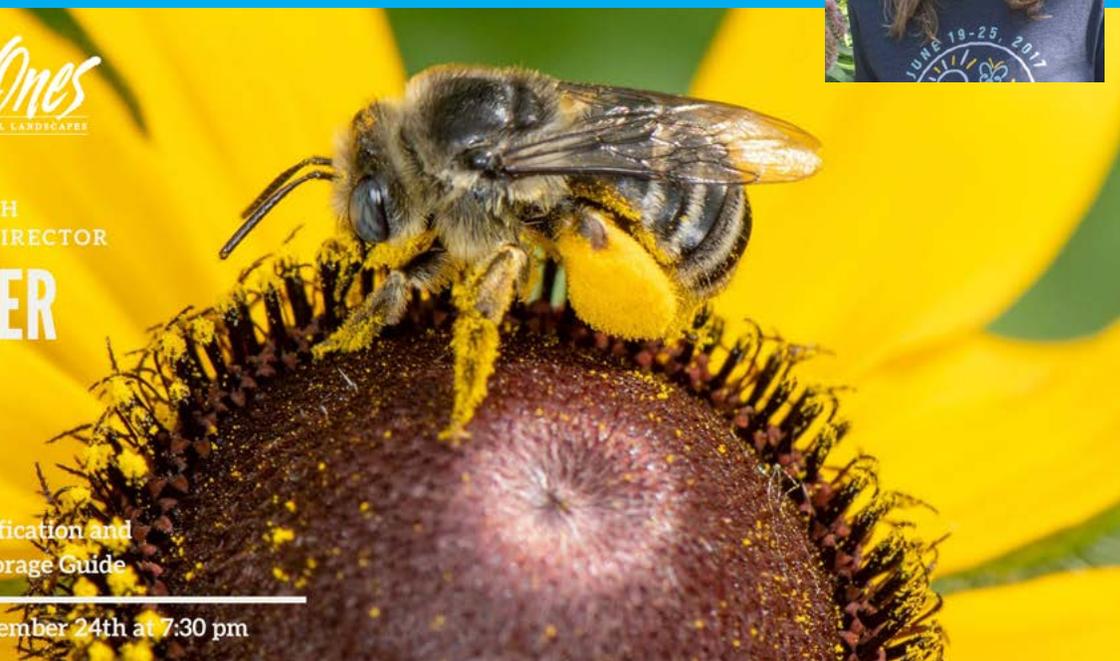


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# Former national, chapter Wild Ones president Tim Lewis dies

Tim Lewis, a longtime advocate for natural landscaping and a former Wild Ones national and chapter president, died July 12 after an extended illness.

Lewis, 72, of Rockford, Illinois, was on the national Wild Ones Board of Directors from 2004-2016, serving as president the last six years. In addition, Lewis served as the Rock River Valley (Illinois) chapter president from 2003-2007, as well as in many other roles. He even built the chapter's display booth from scratch.

"His own design was admired by many, especially when it made its appearance at the annual meeting for Wild Ones chapter leaders at the national headquarters," wrote Constance McCarthy, chapter president in the Rock River Valley July newsletter. "With its braces and clamps, it could be anchored to a table so securely that it never blew over, no matter how fierce the winds."

Ginnie Watson, Rock River Valley Chapter library coordinator and longtime friend, said Lewis attended his first chapter Wild Ones meeting in September 1996, and had no intention of joining the organization. But he found the program so compelling that he began his membership that night.

"He spent the next six years learning everything he could about native plants, which included working for a local native plant nursery and putting in his first little native plant garden," Watson said. "That



Tim Lewis

interest moved him to fill his yard with an impressive display of prairie, shade, swale and rain garden areas."

In 2002, Lewis began his lengthy volunteer tenure, and served as chapter webmaster, plant rescues chair, mentor coordinator and merchandise coordinator. After completing his term of president, he also served in the voting board position of immediate past president.

"He was responsible for the many brochures that promoted our plant sales, as well as our membership brochure," Watson said. "He functioned as our meeting photographer for most of our monthly educational programs. Tim and his wife, Janaan, folded, labeled and mailed our chapter newsletter to those who preferred a hard copy rather than the digital version, a task Janaan has graciously agreed to continue."

In 2004, he joined the national Board of Directors, and in August 2010, the Board elected Lewis as national president. During his ten-

ure as president, membership grew about 40% to more than 4,000.

In his last president column in the *Wild Ones Journal* in 2015, Lewis looked back at the accomplishments completed during his tenure. He wrote that he was happy to serve because it gave him the opportunity to make a difference.

"It has been a way for me to give back to the organization that has taught me the benefits of native landscaping," he said. "I am very proud of what Wild Ones has accomplished under my watch."

Some of those achievements include:

- Changing from a working board to a policy board
- Establishing a set of governance policies
- Setting up committees to do the work of the board
- Completing the first financial audit and continuing to have audits or reviews
- Bringing chapters and the national organization closer together to work as one organization

Lewis wrote: "I did not accomplish these things myself. I had the honor of working with the Board of Directors, two executive directors, headquarters staff, honorary directors, several committee chairmen and chairwomen, and Wild Ones members who all worked together as a team."

One of those executive directors was Donna VanBuecken, who worked closely with Lewis until her retirement in 2015.



Photo by Ginnie Watson

Left, top: Tim Lewis holds a commemorative gavel as Janice Hand, left, takes over as national Wild Ones president. Center is Donna VanBuecken, Wild Ones executive director at the time.

Left, center: Tim Lewis demonstrates how to net a monarch butterfly at the WILD Center in 2012.

Left, bottom: This plaque at the WILD Center honors Lewis with his favorite quote by Chief Seattle.

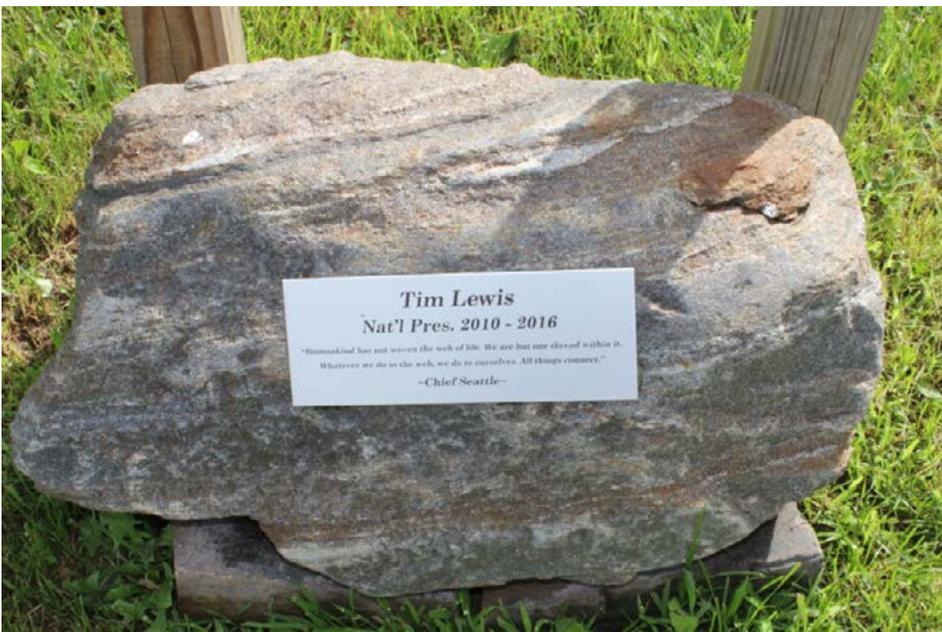


Photo by Donna VanBuecken

“I knew all the Wild Ones presidents from 1996 through 2015, and I can say that there was no one like Tim Lewis,” she said. “Tim was all about making sure the chapters worked together with a unified voice. As he once said in a Wild Ones *Journal* article, ‘Although the national strategy makes a huge case for pollinator habitat, getting the public to consider the guidelines important enough to undertake in their own yards and other land holdings will continue to take a huge information effort.’ Tim saw the big picture in the way natural landscaping was an important part of the Circle of Life.”

Lewis was born May 2, 1948, in Billings, Montana. A graduate of Western Illinois University, he was also a veteran of the U.S. Army serving during the Vietnam War. He married Janaan Peterson on June 26, 1971 in Rockford and owned and operated Lewis Communications until his retirement.

Watson said: “We are so grateful to Tim Lewis for sharing his time, energy and knowledge with our local Rock River Valley Chapter, as well as the national organization. Such gifts are precious to an all-volunteer organization such as ours. Tim’s desire for unity within our organization as well as nature, is expressed in his favorite nature quote: ‘*Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things connect.*’” —Chief Seattle



# How to gather, clean and share prairie seed

By Donna VanBuecken

This is the time of year we plan to gather seed from many of the prairie plants. It's a pretty easy task to accomplish and it is an excellent opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy the fall. If you plan to harvest seed from a preserve or from private property, don't forget to ask permission from the landowner first.

Most grass seeds can be easily stripped from the stalk, but not all forbs species are as easy. Some have pods, some have heads that cling tightly to the seed and others have parachutes that help them fly away. There is a general rule of how much seed to collect: typically one-third of the population for common species and 10% of rare species.

Be sure you can positively identify the plants and their seeds before gathering. You can gather seeds into empty plastic milk jugs that have had their tops cut off and their handles attached to your waist by a belt. Or, you can gather them into paper grocery bags. Label each container for site and date, and plan to store them in the garage, but up off the floor until they are completely dry.



When the plants are dry enough to start cleaning, put on gloves and start breaking the seeds free from heads and pods that haven't loosened the seed on their own. Some you can just strip off on your own. But others, like the yellow cone-flower (*Ratibida pinnata*), you'll need to roll off on a screen.

Here are a couple of resources to help you find the best way to gather seed:

- [Seed Collecting](#) provided by Wild Ones Natural Landscapers Ltd
- [Collecting Advice](#) by Wild Ones St Louis Chapter
- [Germination Instructions](#) by Prairie Moon Nursery
- ["The Prairie in Seed: Identifying Seed Bearing Prairie Plants in the Upper Midwest,"](#) a book by Dave Williams
- [Guidelines for Selecting Native Plants: The Importance of Local Genotypes](#), an updated Wild Ones paper

If you have extra seed, plan to share with your fellow Wild Ones at your local chapter's Seed Exchanges, or with your extended family or



Top: Fall prairie plants from one of the WILD Center gardens. Bottom: Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter volunteers clean seed at the WILD Center. From left are John VanBuecken, Roger Kanitz, Carol Niendorf and Dave Peck.

friends or your next-door neighbors.

And, as you gather milkweed seed this fall and find you have extra, plan to send the pods on to [Monarch Watch](#). Be sure to read the guidelines on how to handle the seed. If you live in Ohio, you can share your milkweed seed through the [Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative](#). See also [Help TPE Collect Milkweed Seed](#).

*Donna VanBuecken was the first executive director of Wild Ones, and in her retirement, writes a blog on native plants and natural landscaping at [www.acentnatural.com](http://www.acentnatural.com). She is also an honorary director of Wild Ones, and a member of the Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter.*

Below: A kindergartener creates a clover bouquet while weeding in the school yard.

# New Orleans school garden funded by SFE grant

Students at Homer A. Plessy Community School in New Orleans, Louisiana, have created a native garden that highlights plants of the Southeast Louisiana Coastal Wetlands, thanks, in part, to a Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant.

In August, the garden was certified by the Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans as a Native Louisiana Habitat.

Plessy School Director of Development Julie Hanks said second grade students helped plant the first of the native plants in May 2019, and the following school year, in November 2019, the After School program added to the garden, which “helped bring joy and learning to our school and its natural surroundings.”

The garden is being used as a teaching tool for ecological studies for Plessy School’s Pre-kindergarten through eighth grade students. The school is targeting key educational concepts, such as water conservation, botany and plant identification, germination/propagation and habitat protection.

The garden has also allowed volunteers and students to identify various butterflies, birds and amphibians, such as gulf fritillaries, tiger swallowtails, viceroy butterflies, ruby-throated hummingbirds, blue jays, green anoles and others.

For many of the students, the school garden is not only their first experience with a native garden, but also their first opportunity to plant and maintain a garden.

In her year-end report, Hanks wrote that the students were diligent, bordering on obsessive in the beginning, wanting to see the plants grow



All photos courtesy Valerie Massimi

immediately. “This taught patience and really paid off when the various plants such as the passionflowers attracted butterflies.”

Plessy’s After School program also has a horticulture element, and the leader has helped explain care and maintenance to both students and teachers.

For others thinking of starting a similar project, Hanks had the following advice.

“Make sure your area, soil and lighting are sufficient to plant a garden. Plessy School learned that the sunlight in the gardening area was being blocked by a tree limb. We had to pay to have the limb removed,

which cost us more than the grant we were awarded.”

Luckily a Plessy parent, Philip Cooper, donated the extra money for the limb removal and later created beautiful natural garden borders from the removed invasive Camphor tree limbs.

Project Coordinator Valerie Massimi, Plessy parent and garden volunteer, also recommended that you find other native gardeners or native gardening groups who can mentor you and give advice on your native garden.

Massimi said she got involved in the project because she believed that the students should have a



Clockwise from above: Garden coordinator and Plessy parent Valerie Massimi works a booth to educate community members about native gardening during Plessy Community School's quarterly art market in the French Quarter; Two students help propagate Louisiana irises for sale at the Plessy Art Market; Two students prepare to plant peas in the Plessy vegetable garden; A group of second graders are ready to plant a native paw-paw tree in the school yard; Development Director Julie Hanks, parent volunteer Valerie Massimi and Head of School Meghan Raychaudhuri accept the Native Plant Initiative's Native Louisiana Habitat certification on Aug. 3, 2020.



garden and that it would beautify the school. The school already had the two raised beds, but they were filled with weeds.

They decided to create one garden for vegetables and another for native plants. "When I take children into the garden, I explain that we are growing food for people in the vegetable garden and food for wildlife like butterflies and birds in the native garden," Massimi said.

She said it's been fun to see the butterflies coming to their garden and to see the plants establishing themselves. She acknowledged it was a lot of work in the beginning.

"We did a lot of planting and moving stuff that we didn't want to

be there," she said. "But now it's coming together and we have things blooming throughout the year thanks to our temperate southern climate."

Plessy's after school program has evolved to include gardening, and Massimi works with a teacher and the students to maintain their gardens. The native garden is approximately 12-by-20 feet and includes 33 species, all native to Southeast Louisiana. But what is even more exciting is that they have expanded their native plantings to the school's front yard as well.

"Once we started going native, there was a realization that we should use more native plants since they are so adaptable, sturdy and beautiful," Massimi said.

Hanks said Plessy School will continue to grow and maintain the native garden, as the continued use of the space and maintenance has taught students about upkeep and growth cycles like dormancy.

While they added mulch to impede weed growth, students also pull weeds by hand and get quite frustrated by the natural growth of weeds, she said. "Teachers are amazed at gardening's calming effect..." Hanks said.

"Kids get so excited about the garden, and they really love going there," Massimi added. "It's been really touching to work with them, and I think it is also teaching the kids to be better stewards of our planet."

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**Mary Jo Lavelle**, Non-member

## Correction

A photo of a landscape in progress project, which appeared on page 32 of the Summer 2020 issue of *Wild Ones Journal*, was attributed to the wrong photographer. The correct photographer is Sally Wencel.