

The background of the cover is a photograph of a lush field of wildflowers. In the foreground, several large yellow daisy-like flowers with dark brown centers are prominent. Interspersed among them are numerous tall, thin spikes of small purple flowers. The field extends into the distance, where more yellow flowers and green foliage are visible against a clear, bright blue sky. The overall scene is a healthy, natural landscape.

Wild Ones

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

SUMMER 2020 • *Journal* • VOL. 33, NO. 2

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



A jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) emerges from the ground.

and other plants I haven't identified yet makes me smile every time.

Like me, many people are enjoying the therapeutic benefits of digging in the dirt. The anticipation of planning a victory garden, a pollinator garden, or in my case, a woodland edge restoration of sorts. The "take that" feeling of getting the garlic mustard plant with the tap root intact.

The importance of plants, and specifically native plants, was evident in the unprecedented success of Prairie Nursery's annual Earth Day sharing program. Every year Prairie Nursery in Westfield, Wisconsin sponsors a nonprofit organization devoted to improving the planet's ecological health during the week of Earth Day celebrations. Neil Diboll, president of Prairie Nursery and Wild Ones Lifetime Honorary Director, dedicated 3% of gross sales during the week of Earth Day, or \$5,100, to Wild Ones. That's significantly more than was raised in previous years.

Not only is it a wonderful gift, but it shows how much people value natural landscapes when they have the time to enjoy it. Wild Ones is grateful to Neil and the entire staff of Prairie Nursery for their efforts and generous contribution!

Another Wild Ones Lifetime Honorary Director, Doug Tallamy, will be giving a webinar for Wild Ones this summer. It is scheduled for Thursday, July 9, at 7:30 p.m. Eastern time zone. His lecture will be followed by questions from participants. Doug is my favorite speaker, and I always look forward to hearing his latest talk. We hope you can join us for this very special event! Details will be emailed to members. To make your reservation, click on the Eventbrite link on Page 27 of the Journal.

We wish to thank Elaine Krizenesky for her time working for Wild Ones as the national office director and wish her well in the future. In the meantime, enjoy your summer, your native plants and your family and friends — even if it is by Facetime or Zoom. And most of all, stay healthy! — Rita Ulrich

Life is different this Spring and the adjustment to work-from-home and stay-at-home orders has been difficult for many people. One of the bright spots in this new normal is a renewed interest in gardening. My neighbors were out doing something every chance they got. And not just blowing leaves. Many people were planning their vegetable gardens, flower gardens and native gardens. I have been digging up plants from the soon-to-be-sold farm where I was raised to replace a bumper crop of garlic mustard and other invasives at my new home. It is slow going, but discovering emerging jack-in-the-pulpit, wild geranium



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

JUNE

National Great Outdoors Month

Celebrate your native species June 6 for National Prairie Day and grab your camera to document your masterpiece on June 15 for Natural Photography Day.

National Pollinator Month

This is the time to plant pollinator gardens of native, non-invasive pollen and nectar-producing plants that will attract bees, birds, bats, and other natural pollinators.

June 15- Aug. 7

Vote for the Wild Ones Board of Directors by going to the Members Only page at www.wildones.org.

JULY

July 9

Webinar with Wild Ones Lifetime Honorary Director Douglas Tallamy

Join Wild Ones members at 7:30 p.m. Eastern time zone for a webinar by Tallamy, a professor of entomology at the University of Delaware and author of "Bringing Nature Home." Stay tuned for details.

July 11

National Cheer Up the Lonely Day

To mark this day, how about taking a bouquet of native flowers from your garden to someone who is missing a loved one?

July 22

National Hammock Day

The best way to really enjoy your native plants and pollinators is from the comfort of your own backyard.

AUGUST

Aug. 17

National Nonprofit Day

How can you celebrate? Tell a friend about Wild Ones, give a neighbor a native plant and a rain garden or monarch brochure, talk to a local garden club about native plants and Wild Ones, give a gift membership to a newlywed or someone purchasing a new house, or send in a special donation to celebrate Wild Ones and its mission.

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 19

Wild Ones Annual Meeting.

Webinar format. Stay tuned for details.

CHAPTER ANNIVERSARIES

Greater DuPage, Illinois	28 years
Milwaukee-Southwest-Wehr, Wisconsin	26 years
Root River Area, Wisconsin	19 years
Twin Cities, Minnesota	19 years
Red Cedar, Michigan	18 years
Wolf River, Wisconsin	16 years
Mid-Mitten, Michigan	14 years
Oak Openings Region, Ohio	13 years
Kettle Moraine, Wisconsin	9 years
Northfield Prairie Partners, Minnesota	9 years
Dayton Area, Ohio	4 years
Grand Traverse, Michigan	3 years
Driftless Area, Wisconsin	3 years
Loess Hills, Iowa	3 years
Central Arkansas, Arkansas	1 year
Northwoods Gateway, Wisconsin	1 year

IN MEMORIUM

John Reindl

Madison (Wisconsin) Chapter



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PHOTO: Laura Hedien



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A dramatic shift in gardening is underway as we move away from the practice of planting lone specimens isolated by seas of mulch. A more resilient approach takes into account that plants do not grow in isolation and that their interactions help them thrive. Nature abhors a void and will try to fill in empty spaces.

By being proactive in the process, combining species that have coevolved together and layering them, we create more resilient plantings that reduce overall maintenance and weed pressure. This will inherently produce more naturalistic-looking gardens that can be inspired by wild native plant communities. This approach does not exclude more formal designs. These can be achieved without compromising resilience by taking advantage of plants' physical attributes to create rhythmic patterns.



Solidago odora
Pycnanthemum incanum





Member Garden

Katharin Mason-Wolf
Chapter President, Oak Openings Region (Ohio)

All photos courtesy
Katharin Mason-Wolf

Bloodroot is an early spring woodland wildflower.

Slow and steady. Just like the tortoise that won the race with the hare in the children's story, Katharin Mason-Wolf knows that slow and steady is often the best way to add native landscaping to your yard or gardens.

"The house we purchased when we relocated to Toledo in 2009 had been beautifully landscaped so I definitely did not want to start from scratch," she recalls. Instead,

it's been a gradual process to add in native plantings as she removed trees and shrubs that had overgrown their space or were declining.

Completing the Ohio State University Extension [Master Gardener](#) training in 2010, Mason-Wolf first started volunteering at The Nature Conservancy's [Kitty Todd Nature Preserve](#) to maintain the Oak Openings Region demonstration garden there. By 2012, she created the first large garden area devoted to natives on her property, and she's been adding to it steadily ever since.

"It was an existing garden area that had spruce trees and hemlocks planted many years before we owned the property," she recalls. "The trees were planted too close together and were not getting enough light so they were not healthy at all."

The first thing she did was take all those plants out. She doesn't

regret doing that, but she was surprised at the stark change it created in her yard. "Our privacy was gone," she says.

In its place, she planted ninebark cultivars before she knew cultivars weren't true natives. Next, she planted viburnum, bought at a local nursery, which to her surprise came with viburnum leaf beetles.

"I don't mind my plants getting eaten by native insects," she says, "but when a nonnative pest completely defoliates an area...." Well, let's just say she wasn't happy.

For those new to native landscaping, she tells them not to get worried if a native plant takes off and starts reseeding. She planted dense blazing star (*Liatris spicata*) in her new garden, and it "reseeded itself like crazy," she says.

"I first panicked about it, pulling it out, moving it to other areas of the

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 or journal@wildones.org. Please include your contact information so we can get in touch with you.



Member Garden

Katharin Mason-Wolf
Chapter President
Oak Openings Region (Ohio)

About the Yard

- The Mason-Wolf home is on a half-acre lot in the village of Ottawa Hills in Northwest Ohio. The property includes a wooded hillside that backs up to a floodplain area, which she has worked on for a decade to clear out honeysuckle, burning bush and garlic mustard, and thus allow the existing native plants to thrive.
- A little more than half of the plants are native to Ohio.
- Mason-Wolf said it's difficult for her to select a favorite plant or two since her favorites change depending on the time of the season. However, some of her favorites include hepatica (*Hepatica acutiloba*) due to its long-lasting flowers and nearly-evergreen leaves that have such an interesting texture, shape and mottled coloring; cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) due to its stunning color and ability to attract hummingbirds; partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*) for its delicate leaves and complex, bright yellow flowers that attract bees; and flat-topped aster (*Doellingeria umbellata*) for its sturdy stems and large flower clusters in the fall.
- Her gardens are often visited by pollinators, such as carpenter bees, a variety of bumblebees, hover flies, and swallowtail, mourning cloak and red admiral butterflies. Plus, Mason-Wolf says she sees a lot of monarch butterflies and caterpillars.
- The garden received an honorable mention for the 2019 Native Landscape Residential Award, Wild Ones Oak Openings (Ohio) Chapter.

Cardinal flower is a favorite summer wildflower for hummingbirds.

yard, and giving it away," she says. "If I would have just left it alone, things would have balanced out. It takes time for some native plants to become established, and you should just let nature do its job."

Mason-Wolf also recommends that those new to native landscaping consult with landscape designers that specialize in native planting to choose plants that are right for the soil and light conditions, and plan out the placement.

"I regret that I planted some shrubs and small trees before fully understanding the distinctions be-

tween straight native species, native cultivars and species related to our local natives that are not strictly native to our area," she said. "I would have made different selections had I known what I know now."

Those changes include *not* planting a buttonbush cultivar and a deciduous holly cultivar, and transplanting some ferns that she later learned were nonnative.

She also encourages people to keep things trimmed and well-tended, and consider adding in a Wild Ones sign, so people know that your garden is planned and deliberate.

"You don't want people to think it's just a weed patch," she says.

Her property also includes a wooded hillside that backs up to a floodplain area filled with invasive plants that she's slowly been getting rid of.

"There are a lot of nice native trees down there — ash, oak, box-elder, basswood — and then it was mostly honeysuckle, burning bush and garlic mustard," she said. She's recently also started seeing another invasive, lesser celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria* L.) that she's added to her list to cut, pull or spray.



Member Garden

Katharin Mason-Wolf
Chapter President
Oak Openings Region (Ohio)



Mason-Wolf said her plans for the future include continuing to improve the wooded hillside behind her house by planting more natives and increasing the value of the woodland habitat for a variety of birds, insects and mammals.

But her yard is already home to lots of wildlife. "We regularly see blue jays, robins, cardinals, wrens, hummingbirds, a variety of hawks, juncos, titmice, nuthatches and chipping sparrows, as well as woodpeckers and flickers," she says. This spring, she also saw bluebirds several times. And pollinators are regular visitors, too.

Left, top: Foam flower and goldenseal grow well in partial shade. Left, bottom: Wild ginger was used as an antibiotic by Native Americans and American settlers. Above: Butterfly milkweed is almost hidden in this clump of partridge pea, if not for its bright orange color.

When not busy with her yard, Mason-Wolf and other Wild Ones members helped to rid nonnative invasive plants at a public natural area just down the street from her home.

The group already cleared the area of honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.), common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), porcelain-berry vine (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) and other invasive species.

In March, the group broadcast a seed mixture donated by the University of Toledo through its [Greening-UT Through Service Learning \(GUTS\)](#) program. They plan to add a variety of native shrubs and small trees to help re-establish a healthy native woodland.

"There is a lot of traffic on the street, and during our workdays, we had a lot of people stop and ask what we were doing," Mason-Wolf says. "It allowed us to educate people about native plants."

SFE grant supports new growing space at Albuquerque school

The Inez Elementary School PTA and students in Albuquerque, New Mexico created a new growing space along an area prone to drought and erosion, utilizing an existing 5,000-gallon water harvesting tank to support a new color garden and revitalize a small existing native grass area. And it was all thanks to a Wild Ones Seeds for Education (SFE) grant.

Project coordinator Rebecca Brinkerhoff said site development, traditional adobe brick work and planting took place primarily from March-May 2019, with elementary students in grades kindergarten to fifth grade participating in groups of 10.

Since May 2019, the school has used existing planting beds with hoop coverings to start food crops such as melons and squash, and through SFE have expanded the expansive courtyard with high desert seed mixes, native grasses and wildflowers including desert marigold (*Baileya multiradiata*). Here, students apply STEAM principles: Science, Technology, Engineering, Math with Artisan traditions of the American Indians of the Southwest.

So far, the children and staff have been most excited about seeing how



Students and parents helped to prepare the Inez school site for planting.

much water the earthen berms could hold in a region where there's only 11 inches of precipitation annually.

"Repeatedly, the kids are most impressed with the water retention basins and how much they filled with retained water," Brinkerhoff said, adding they also enjoy the butterflies in the "color bed."

The students also enjoyed learning how to make the adobe bricks from parents.

"The kids absolutely loved building the blocks," Brinkerhoff said. "We did smaller batches of about 30 bricks on multiple days. But if we do another larger scale project, I would do the brick building (100-200 bricks) in a single day with different classes/age groups cycling throughout the day to reduce the amount of set-up/clean-up repetition associated with the build."

"The project illustrates how SFE can be a meaningful nature connection with the children from the Albuquerque area," said SFE Chair Denise Gehring, who visited the site. "The garden represents their natural and New Mexican cultural landscape so well."

From far left: A color native plant garden surrounded by adobe bricks is a new addition to the Inez Elementary School yard; This brightly colored sign at Inez Elementary School shows all the ways students can learn in their Courtyard.



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Native plant news from public gardens across the U.S.



By Matthew Ross

In this regular feature of the Wild Ones Journal, Wild Ones Board Member Matthew Ross will be highlighting different public gardens that have an emphasis on native plants. From educational programs, to native plant feature gardens, and even gardens growing exclusively plants from their respective region, he will highlight the best examples from across the country.

Many of you may not be aware, but Wild Ones is now a member of the American Public Gardens Association, an organization that represents over 600 gardens, arboreta and partner organizations from across the country. This is an exciting new relationship that will provide more exposure for our organization and for the WILD Center in Neenah, Wisconsin.

For the first feature in this series, I will be highlighting the extensive ecological plantings at North Carolina Botanical Garden in Chapel Hill. With over 1,100 acres of gardens, nature preserves and easements, their mission is “to inspire understanding, appreciation and conservation of plants and to advance a sustainable relationship between people and nature.” The garden features ecologically significant plantings, an educational center and a nursery where they sell native plants grown at the garden to the general public. They describe themselves as a conservation garden that propagates native plants to ensure that wild populations are not damaged by wild collecting, provides seeds for reintroduction, conserves habitats, and creates display gardens that demonstrate native biodiversity and sustainable gardening practices. I have had the pleasure of visiting this garden several times through the seasons and always leave the gardens inspired.

Artisan elements, like these heron sculptures, strategically placed in the landscape, provide a focal point when there is limited floral display.

Several of the featured gardens of North Carolina Botanical Garden are intentionally designed and constructed to accurately represent the different habitats of North Carolina including Coastal Plain, Sandhills,

Mountain and Piedmont. The novel concept of having a large cross-section of the state’s flora allows interpretation of the full breadth of the state’s plant diversity in one location. Likewise, they actively research the ecology and restoration of rare and endangered plant species, and maintain a seed bank for the protection of genetic material for some of the rarest plants in the Southeastern U.S.

In addition to the habitat gar-





dens, they showcase an incredible Carnivorous Plants Collection with one of the most diverse collections of pitcher plants (*Sarracenia* sp.) nationally. The gardens consist of a series of raised planters for better viewing. They are celebrated alongside an eye-catching statue of the endemic carnivorous plants found only in North Carolina. Mixed in between the sinister, yet sensational pitchers are a variety of plants that can be found growing in the same bog habitat including Sundew (*Drosera* sp.), Grass Pink orchid (*Calopogon tuberosus*) and Fewflower milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*).

The spirit of conservation permeates the visitor experience with breathtaking photographs, botanical illustrations and even quilts highlighting the beauty of native plants. One of my favorite interpretive displays is the “Plant This, Not That” that focuses on native plant alternatives to invasive species-- once popular in the nursery trade. Every aspect of the visitor’s experience is immersed in conservation. They truly



Left, top: A wattle fence made from stems of harvested herbaceous material provides refuge for a wide assortment of native pollinators and beneficial insects. Left, bottom: The vibrant orange bloom of Fewflower milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*), standing nearly 30 inches tall, attracts the attention of both guests and pollinators. Above: A distant view of the nursery where guests can purchase staff-grown native plants in the garden dotted with the scarlet blooms of fire pink (*Silene virginica* var. *virginica*).

set the bar for sustainable landscape practices in public horticulture including a series of innovative approaches and resources for homeowners including support of native pollinators. Techniques prominently featured at the garden are also highlighted as part of a national display at the United States Botanic Garden last summer.

If you find yourself passing through the Tar Heel state or looking for a new garden to explore, definitely spend a day at North Carolina

Botanical Garden. There is no shortage of impressive design ideas. If you are from the region, it is a phenomenal source of native plants, with known provenance, including rare endemics that you would be hard pressed to find anywhere else.

Matt 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.

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Need an excuse to get outdoors?

We want you to start taking photos featuring native plants and pollinators to enter into our Wild Ones Photo Contest.

Categories will include Natives in the Wild, Pollinators, Wildlife, Natives in Home Landscapes, Wild Ones Member Projects, and a Youth category for our photographers 18 and under. Submissions will begin in September and end by Oct. 15. Watch for an email with more information coming soon.



Gardening for birds in all seasons

By Ned Keller and Kathy McDonald

We are fortunate that birds are present during every month of the year. These feathered gems freely bring us the enjoyment of birdsong and enliven our landscapes with activity. Many of us spend a lot of time creating beneficial landscapes for them. They only ask that we reciprocate in some small ways.

But birds are disappearing across the United States. They are ecological indicators and as Doug Tallamy noted in his new book, *"Nature's Best Hope,"* "we should care whether the ecosystems that support birds are healthy because those same ecosystems support you."

One way to benefit and preserve our native bird species is by planting native plants. As many wild places are reduced with housing and businesses, our yards may be the only suitable habitat for migrants looking for a place to rest in the spring and fall. We want to invite our returning summer residents to set up nesting territories and find a safe place to raise their young in our own landscapes.

To attract birds to our yards, we need to provide food and shelter. We may think of "feeding the birds" as nothing more than filling our feeders with bird seed, but that is only effective in the winter. If we want to have birds in our yard during breeding season, we have to provide the food that birds give to their young.

The McDonalds display a wildlife habitat sign on the side of the house, in their "pocket prairie." This photo, from last spring, shows a variety of prairie plants like prairie dock, compass plant, milkweed, tall coreopsis, gray-headed coneflower, big and little bluestem, Indian Grass and more. "We get lots of birds nesting and visiting in the yard," Kathy McDonald says.



Nesting bluebirds are common in the McDonald yard, thanks to native landscaping.

For almost all songbirds, that means insects since very few songbirds raise their young on seeds. And to get the best variety and number of insects, native plants outproduce nonnatives, hands down.

You may think "attracting insects" means planting species that attract pollinators such as bees and butterflies. That's good, but it's far

from being the whole story. Selecting "host plants" for insects is even more important. "Host plants" refers to plants eaten by insects, particularly moth and butterfly caterpillars. Many caterpillars are very particular about the plants they eat, and will only eat a few native species. We're all familiar with Monarch butterfly caterpillars specializing on milkweed,



but the same principle applies to numerous other species. If you want to attract a variety of insects, you need a variety of the right host plants. Then we can ensure that a variety of local Lepidoptera can complete their life cycle. Most butterfly and moth guides will give a list of host plants to help you decide what is best for your area.

Besides eating, birds need to have nest sites and places to hide from predators. Native shrubs and trees provide those, as well as additional sources of food, both seeds and berries for migrant birds, and insects for feeding themselves and their nestlings. Even in the winter, birds can forage in bark crevices for insects and insect eggs. Dense cover near feeding stations will also provide safety from predators, thereby attracting more birds to your yard. We have heard to leave the leaf litter, and this is one reason why.

The concept of vertical layering – planting ground covers, taller forbs, shrubs, understory trees and canopy trees in the same area – is particularly important when it comes to attracting birds. Birds are, after all, intensely vertical creatures, which use all those layers. Granted, you probably don't have the resources to plant a 70-foot oak tree! But you *can* plant a 7-foot oak, which will serve admirably as a shrub, and which will grow into an understory-sized tree faster than you think. And since oaks attract a greater variety of Lepidoptera caterpillars than any other plant genus, you can start attracting insects, and birds, right away. Planting nectar plants along woodland borders and in sunny areas will help attract butterflies and other beneficial insects.

All this has been very general. Which plants best fit the criteria we have discussed is very much a local question – there is no way to make suggestions that would work across



Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) are one of the first spring native plants to bloom.

the country. I could tell you what I have planted in my Cincinnati yard, but that won't help you if you live in Wisconsin, or Georgia, or Arizona. Consult your local Wild Ones chapter, native plant nurseries in your area, or county extension offices to find out what native plants will do well in your area.

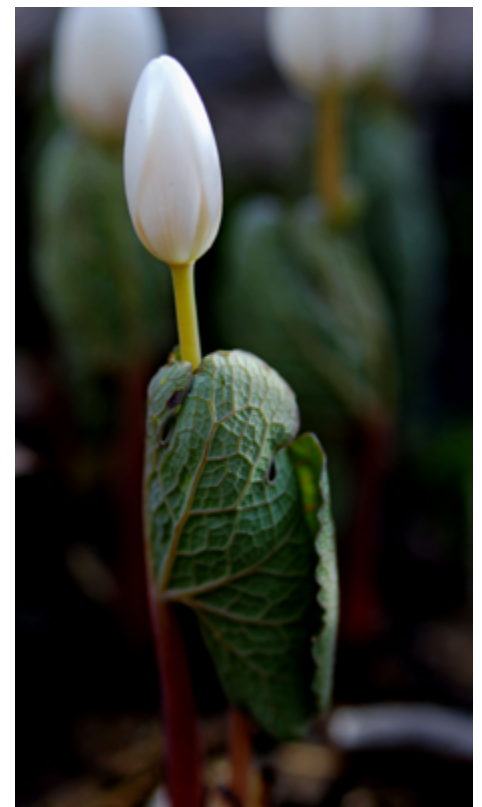
Sound complicated? It isn't, really. Spend some time in natural areas where you live, and pay attention to the plants that you find growing there throughout the year. Think about some of the plants that appeal to you and try to incorporate them into your yard. Your objective should be to recreate a mini version of a wild habitat in your yard, replacing unproductive space like a lawn with plants that are native to your area.

Don't think you have to do it all at once. Add a little more wilderness to your yard a bit at a time, and before you know it, you will start to see a greater variety of birds and other wildlife in your yard than you ever thought possible.

Kathy McDonald and Ned Keller are long-time birders and naturalists who enjoy being in nature to learn more about local flora and fauna, as well

as landscaping with a purpose to welcome wildlife to their yard. Kathy was one of the founding members of Greater Cincinnati Chapter of Wild Ones in 1999. Ned is the president of Audubon Society of (Cincinnati) Ohio. Both serve on the board of the Midwest Native Plant Society.

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) is just beginning to open.





What Chicago and you can do to save birds

By Shirlee A. Hoffman

In the Spring 2020 *Wild Ones Journal*, members were asked what we are doing to help birds survive and thrive again. This question is particularly relevant for Chicago with its many tall buildings.

We live in a three-story townhome, a seven-minute walk from Lake Michigan and the Lake Michigan Flyway. On the bright side, we can easily watch the migrating birds flit among the trees in the common area behind our place. On the dark side, as many as five birds a season didn't notice our home in time to avoid it and ended up dead, mostly in our driveway.

For the past two years, though, we have tried to alert birds to the collision danger they face by hanging owl strips in our windows. Do the strips help? Yes, somewhat. The count per season is down to one or two. Maybe someday we'll be at zero!

On average, approximately 600 million birds are killed in the U.S. by crashing into buildings each year. Chicago's skyline, in the heart of the Lake Michigan Flyway and used by approximately 3 million migrating birds during fall and spring migration, is the most dangerous area in the country for birds, the Chicago Tribune reported.

Clearly, Chicago has the opportunity to play a vital role in the effort to save birds and the city has responded to the challenge. In recent years, the Chicago Park District has assiduously replaced grass lawns all along the 18-mile lakefront with swaths of well-tended native plants to provide refuge and sustenance to migrating birds.

But the bird collision issue is still huge, which is why many — myself included — are fighting to keep the Obama Foundation from building the 235-foot, 20-story Obama Presidential Center (not his Presidential

Library) in Jackson Park on the Lake Michigan lakefront.

Jackson Park is clearly an important stop on the Lake Michigan Flyway. "More than 250 species of birds have been identified as either permanent residents or migrants passing through this special area," according to the Chicago Park District. Unfortunately, both the location and design of the proposed building virtually guarantee it will be dangerous to migrating birds.

Nevertheless, to date, the two groups leading the effort to stop the Obama Presidential Center from being built in Jackson Park, Protect Our Parks which has filed a lawsuit, and Jackson Park Watch which monitors the pending Federal Reviews, have not been openly supported by any of the 21 organizations belonging to the Chicago area's Bird Conservation Network.

The Obama Presidential Center main tower building will be prominently visible not only from the land and skies of Chicago, but also from the Indiana and Michigan shores. Too bad the birds won't be able to

enjoy the view.

As the only tall building along Chicago's south lakefront, the structure has the potential to add to the death of scores of additional birds each year from collisions.

I unequivocally welcome the Obama Presidential Center to Chicago — as long as it is built on one of several other eligible sites. And I encourage others to voice their concerns about this project or other similar projects in their cities, regions and states. It's time we all become an advocate for birds everywhere.

Shirlee A. Hoffman is a long-time Wild Ones member. She works in the Burnham Nature Preserve on Chicago's south side and wanders in her own 12-foot by 25-foot native garden. More regularly, she is a volunteer docent at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute.

Editor's Note: For other ideas how to protect birds, read "Simple ways to prevent birds from colliding with your window," on Page 21 of the Autumn 2018 Wild Ones Journal.

A model of the proposed Obama Presidential Center for Chicago's South Side. Although the final details are still being determined, in addition to the main tower, the planned campus will feature several lower buildings, a large open-air entertainment space, pedestrian walkways and stretches of lawn.





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Vote for our Board of Director candidates

Dear Wild Ones member:

Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd. is a 501(c)3 Wisconsin corporation governed by a Board of Directors. According to Wild Ones bylaws, the board will consist of 10-15 directors. Elections are held every two years, and directors serve a four-year term.

Denise Gehring, Janice Hand and Matthew Ross are seeking another term on the board. New candidates are Karl Ackermann, Roberta Jannsen, Laura Klemm, Loris Damerow and Jim Poznak.

You may vote for the full slate; if all are seated, the board will have 14 board members. All candidates who receive at least 51% of votes will be seated on the board.

Newly elected directors will begin their term on

Sept. 18 prior to the 2020 Annual Meeting on Sept. 19.

Continuing on the board are Marti Agler, Ellen Folts, Susan Hall, Pam Todd, Rita Ulrich and Sally Wencel. Rick Sanders and Karen Syverson are retiring from the board at the end of this term.

Voting will take place via print ballot or the Wild Ones Member Site. Visit wildones.org and click the Member Login button to log in and cast your vote. If you have not used the Member Site before, you will need to first register your email address for online access. Please note that it takes 24-48 hours for email registrations to be completed.

Voting will take place from June 15 to Aug. 7, 2020.

Meet the candidates...



Karl H. Ackermann
Munster, Indiana
Wild Ones Gibson Woods Chapter

Professional Affiliations: MBA, International Business; BS Engineering Technology; Certificate in Horticulture with High Honors; Recipient of Shirley Heinze Bringing Nature Home Award.

Background: Karl grew up on the South Side of Chicago. He credits his interest in gardening to his parents who led their local garden club in Riverdale, Illinois. After joining Wild Ones four years ago and being inspired by Lorrie Otto, Doug Tallamy and his fellow chapter members, he quickly realized this organization is not your parents' garden club! As James Madison wrote in the 1790s, "There is a relation and proportion between flora and fauna."

Karl has extensive global business experience, having worked in 16 different countries. He has done complex business engagements involving CEOs of billion-dollar companies, shop floor associates and everyone in between. The focus of these engagements has always been continuous improvement. His background also includes volunteering with the United Way and leading a community needs assessment.

Karl is the president and treasurer of the Gibson Woods Wild Ones chapter in Northwest Indiana. The group has relationships with schools, garden clubs, businesses, the Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Save the Dunes, The Nature Conservancy, Master Gardeners and others. Karl notes that the projects they are working on, together

with regular speaking engagements and fundraising, result in growing membership and a healthy chapter.

Vision for Wild Ones: Karl's vision for Wild Ones includes growing membership by doing the right things in the right way. He believes that engaging relationships at all levels and working together on projects is the essence of bringing about continuous improvement in any situation. Karl sees a great opportunity to share best practices between chapters, and that today, more than ever, there is a great sense of urgency to educate and lead by example the importance of native plants in the home landscape.

"The Wild Ones organization has relationships with local, regional and global organizations, and we can parlay these relationships for our mutual benefit and get our message out," he said. "Ultimately, we are making our own legacy to make this world a better place for our children." Karl can use his experience to help analyze and foster continuous improvement in the whole Wild Ones organization and help strengthen internal and external relationships.



Loris Damerow
Appleton, Wisconsin
Wild Ones Fox Valley Area

Professional Affiliation: Former landscape designer, Registered Art Therapist (ATR), retired Director of the Center for Grieving Children/Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley.

Background: Loris Damerow had her eye on Wild Ones when she moved to Appleton in 2007. She was eager to find ‘plant people’ who shared her interest in the natural world. For almost a decade, she had been running a small landscape design business from her rural home on the Wisconsin/Illinois border; a business that helped clients create beauty and function in their own outdoor spaces.

Loris found the Fox Valley Area Wild Ones Chapter to be very active with many opportunities to learn about native plants and the vital role that they play in our world. In 2012, she became the president of the chapter and served in that capacity for three years. During those years, two new programs were added: mentoring and the speaker’s bureau. She initiated a new communications venue, a monthly electronic newsletter. She continues to participate in these committees and serves as the Chapter’s chairwoman of programs and tours. “Working with others to promote the importance of native plants is deeply satisfying and fun. Becoming an active member of Wild Ones has greatly informed my concept of environmental education and my delight in the natural world,” Loris said.

An art therapist by training, Loris has served as the director of a community-based support program for children and families over her past 11 years in the Fox Valley. This directorship increased her first-hand knowledge of nonprofit governance, funding and the critical role that volunteers play. Currently, she serves on the Executive Council for the Children’s Health Alliance of Wisconsin and two other governing boards.

Vision for Wild Ones: Loris believes that the Wild Ones’ message is needed on the planet, now, more than ever. Promoting the importance of native plants and sustainable landscaping through a grass-roots membership provides an interactive ‘handhold’ to the future. Wild Ones has emerged from a period of internal transition over the past few years poised to broaden its connection to other environmental organizations, its own membership, and the general public. Loris hopes that her participation on the Wild Ones National Board will help strengthen these efforts.



Roberta K. Jannsen
Oak Park, Illinois
Wild Ones West Cook Chapter

Professional Affiliation: MA in Education, Master Naturalist, Master Gardener, Natural Areas Conservation Certificate (pending), Leadership Certificate, Project Management Certificate

Background: Although Roberta was raised in Chicago, her family had an organic farm in northwest Indiana where she learned a deep love and respect for all of nature. She gardens exclusively with natives and is thrilled to watch birds, insects and butterflies become attracted to her little habitat.

After a career developing executive and continuing

education programs in university settings and teaching nonprofit management, Roberta retired and dedicated her life to nature through leading forest bathing, interpretive and fitness hikes in the Cook County Forest Preserve, service on nonprofits boards related to nature issues, and volunteering at Morton Arboretum.

While still working full time, Roberta founded, and was Director for 5 years, a nonprofit dedicated to connecting people and the earth. Thus, she has been on both sides of nonprofit board work. While there, she developed a high school course that taught high school students about leadership and business—and the business was gardening.

Her interest in the powerful work of Wild Ones comes from a lifetime devoted to work related to furthering our commitment to biodiversity through combining her education, business and leadership background with her passion for native plants.

Vision for Wild Ones: Roberta hopes to increase the financial sustainability of Wild Ones through her fundraising and grant-writing background; to increase our visibility and reach through education about natives; to strengthen the board through her non-profit management background; and to further enhance the relationship between the board and the chapters.



Laura Klemm
Sheboygan, Wisconsin
Wild Ones Partner-at-Large

Professional Affiliation: BBA; BS, Biology, MS, Sustainable Management with courses in Nonprofit Management, Web design and Readers Advisory

Background: Born in Maryland, Laura grew up on Long Island, and attended college in Virginia and North Carolina.

She joined Wild Ones Sheboygan Tension Zone Chapter in July 2006 and was a member until they disbanded in 2009. She then joined as a Partner-at-Large in June 2014.

Laura’s work includes administrative and science positions. Her most notable job with science was traveling with the Research Triangle Institute for the National Human Exposure Assessment Survey (NHEXAS) pilot program, which was funded by the EPA and CDC. She has also worked on a NASA project growing plants in hydroponic solutions, a USDA project in corn genetics and product claim support for SC Johnson & Son.

Laura’s administrative experience includes working for an architect, a health care organization and a small manufacturer. In 2018, she received her master’s in Sustainable Management after more than 10 years as a stay-at-home mom.

Laura’s current volunteer activities include being team leader for Alliance for the Great Lakes beach cleanup, a house manager for the Sheboygan Area Youth Symphony, an executive board member with Friends of

North Point, and a judge for WO Seeds for Education.

Vision for Wild Ones: The Wild Ones board is the backbone of the organization, and local chapters look to the board for direction, resources and structure. It empowers the local grassroots activities of the chapters, giving credibility to those activities.

Laura would like to see Wild Ones partner with groups such as Xerces and Audubon nationally. She feels local chapters could be encouraged to partner with regional and local groups. Examples from her experience are the Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership, the Sheboygan River Basin Partnership and the Glacial Lakes Conservancy.

Laura says that being “in nature” is of critical importance to human health and that the basis for any ecosystem is the plant community. Wild Ones holds an important piece of the environmental puzzle and has a unique role to play in advocating for the use of native plants on every possible piece of land (pot or roof).



Jim Poznak
Oak Park, Illinois
Wild Ones West Cook Chapter,
Illinois

Professional Affiliation: Attorney

Background: Jim lives in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. He is married to Susan Messer, a writer and editor, and they have one daughter, Selena. Jim is now

retired, after having practiced law since 1979. Jim started as a staff attorney with a nonprofit legal aid office, where he was also on the attorney union’s bargaining committee. From 1993 until May 2020, Jim had his own law practice, assisting entrepreneurs with many varied legal issues, including contracts, business disputes and trademarks.

In 1985, Jim was a founding member of the Oak Park Lap Swimmers Association. As the Association’s lead negotiator, Jim convinced the local Park District to provide the first-ever dedicated hours for lap swimmers at the community pool, which still continues and has benefited countless residents.

Jim also served as a committee chair, vice-president, president and board member of the Greater Oak Brook Chamber of Commerce. Jim organized monthly speaking opportunities for Chamber members and the Chamber’s first-ever trade show, which raised around \$10,000 annually for about 10 years. Jim has served as an advisory board member of the College of DuPage Business Development Center, an advisory board member and attorney for a nonprofit that promotes dental health, and the attorney for a nonprofit that rescues border collies.

Since 2011, Jim has organized and supervised dinners for homeless people, serving around 55 guests monthly. Since 2016, Jim has been a member of the West Cook Wild Ones, which fostered his passion and advocacy for native plant gardening. Recently, Jim as-

sisted the Wild Ones National Board with its trademark registrations.

Vision for Wild Ones: Jim embraces the Wild Ones’ vision statement expressed on its website, namely, (a) to collaborate with organizations that have goals similar to those of the Wild Ones, (b) to become recognized as the primary advocate for native gardening, to the same extent as organizations such as the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club are recognized for their work, and (c) to promote native gardening by individuals. As a National Board member, Jim also hopes to help improve the Wild Ones’ racial and age diversity, its financial stability, and most importantly, the Board’s service to the Wild Ones local chapters.

Candidate Seeking a Second Term



Denise Gehring
Toledo, Ohio
Oak Openings Region Chapter,
Lifetime member

Professional Affiliations: (Current) Native Plant Working Group; Metroparks: Rare Plant Monitoring Volunteer; The Nature Conservancy: Volunteer Field Research and Seed Collector; The Collaborative: Native Landscape Consultant;

Ohio Division of Natural Areas & Preserves: Rare Plant Seasonal Botanist; and Ohio Karner Blue Recovery Team.

Past work includes Metroparks Toledo Area: Director of Environmental Programs; University of Toledo: Instructor-Outdoor Education; Cincinnati Public Schools: Outdoor Educator.

Education: Hiram College: BA, Biology; University of Toledo: M. Ed. Educational Technology.

Background: A member since 2008, Denise Gehring served as president of the Oak Openings Region (Ohio) chapter from 2012-2014.

Nationally, Denise co-chaired the Wild Ones *Wild for Monarchs* Initiative. The committee created “Wild for Monarchs” and Citizen Science brochures, monarch chapter resources, drafted the Native Plant Butterfly Garden certification, and collaborated with Monarch Joint Venture and Monarch Watch.

In 2016, Denise joined the national Wild Ones Board, becoming VP in 2019. She serves on national board committees and is the proofreader for the *Wild Ones Journal*. In 2018, she became chair of the *Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education* (SFE) program.

Vision: Denise said: “Supporting our mission is more important than ever. Wild Ones—from new gardener to seasoned professional—are members of an interest-based community who sincerely care about the natural world, and share a love of learning. Chapters are essential—that’s where members get together, support

each other and volunteer as stewards to improve their communities.”

Denise would encourage more sharing between chapters, online, partnering with national conservation organizations, and involving younger leadership. “Let’s be the first conservation organization to nationally award exemplary native gardens and natural landscapes. Finally, let us put scientific findings into practice, and share observations to help Wild Ones and nature prepare for the future.”

Candidate Seeking a Second Term

Candidate: Janice Hand
Bozeman, Montana
Partner-at-Large



Professional Affiliation Retired human resources consultant; BS, Economics; MS, Psychology

Background: Janice Hand believes in Wild Ones’ mission so much she is running for a second term on the Wild Ones board. She originally joined the board in 2015 as an appointee filling a vacancy, then was elected to the board in 2016.

Janice’s involvement in Wild Ones began in 1990 when she lived in northwest Illinois and joined the Wild Ones Lake-to-Prairie Chapter. When the chapter went dormant, she was part of a group of stubborn people who reactivated it during a meeting with a national board member at her dining room table. She now lives in her home state of Montana, back in her mountains, where she is still learning how to go from native plant gardening in woodland shade to gardening in full sun.

Janice started her Wild Ones national service by volunteering for the governance committee, on which she continues to serve. She chaired the 2014 board nominations committee, and has continued on that committee, too. She led development of both the 2015 and 2019 Strategic Plans. This past fall, she stepped down from her three years at national board president.

Vision for Wild Ones: Janice believes Wild Ones has a totally unique niche among U.S. environmental groups. Wild Ones’ mission to preserve biodiversity by encouraging native plantings inherently encompasses the local area’s overall ecosystem health, and does it on a manageable yard-by-yard basis. Members’ intimate knowledge of local species and their enthusiasm for personally sharing that knowledge with others is unique and can’t be replicated by regional maps on websites.

Her vision for Wild Ones’ future is for steady and sustainable growth in membership, solid financial health with all numbers always in black, markedly increased

public visibility, and strong ties between the national office and chapters and among chapters, too.

Candidate Seeking a Second Term



Matthew Ross
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania
Partner-at-Large

Professional Affiliation: Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Horticultural Science, Michigan State University, with an emphasis on Landscape Design and Urban Forestry. Currently, he is the Director of Continuing Education at Longwood Gardens.

Background: Matthew Ross is the Director of Continuing Education at the world-renowned Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, where he manages more than 175 educational programs.

Prior to his arrival at Longwood Gardens, Matthew spent six years in Toledo, Ohio, where he worked as a horticulturist at Toledo Botanical Gardens, instructed nearly 20 courses as an instructor at Owens Community College, and developed a nearly 5-acre urban farm and training center. As part of the site plan for the Robert J. Anderson Training Center, Matthew worked with the local Wild Ones chapter, a myriad of conservation organizations, Toledo Botanical Garden, and his students to source, cultivate, and install tens of thousands of hyper-local native plants throughout the property.

Matthew is a passionate Partner-at-Large and has been on the National Board since 2017. He has served as a judge for the Seeds for Education program, represented Wild Ones at the Monarch Joint Venture annual meeting, and advocated for the use of native plants through a variety of lectures, articles and online programs to reach a national audience. Prior to joining the national board, he was a member of the Oak Openings Chapter from 2009-2014 where he served as a local board member, newsletter contributor, and organized several collaborative programs.

Vision for Wild Ones: You’ll never know where you will find Matthew next as he is an avid traveler who has visited over 400 gardens across the United States, Europe, South America and the Caribbean in search of horticultural and ecological excellence. Some of his favorite expeditions have led him to traversing the swamps of the Everglades, hiking the granite monoliths of northern Alabama, field botanizing on Catalina Island, and exploring the moss-covered trails of the Scottish Highlands. Matthew has had the honor of working along some of the great native plant professionals from across the nation and is excited to carry on his work advocating the use of native plants in the residential landscape with Wild Ones.

Current Directors	Chapter & State	Member of BOD since	Committee work includes
Marti Agler	Smokey Mountain, TN	2018	Finance, Grants
Ellen Folts	Habitat Gardening in Central New York, NY	2018	Nominations, Grants, SFE, Garden Recognition
Susan Hall	Partner-at-Large, Texas	2018	BOD Secretary, Honorary Directors, Grants
Denise Gehring	Oak Openings Region, Ohio	2016	BOD Vice President, SFE, Nomination and Honorary Directors
Janice Hand	Partner-at-Large, MT	2015	BOD Past President, Governance, Grants, SFE, Nominations
Matthew Ross	Partner-at-Large, PA	2016	Honorary Directors, Nominations
Rick Sanders	Partner-at-Large, MT	2018	BOD Treasurer
Karen Syverson	Fox Valley Area, WI	2008	BOD Governance
Pam Todd	West Cook County, IL	2018	Grants, Honorary Directors
Rita Ulrich	Twin Cities, MN	2018	BOD President
Sally Wencel	Tennessee Valley, TN	2016	Governance, Nominations, Grants



Board of Directors Ballot

Vote online at the Member Log-in site or print and mail this ballot by Aug. 7, 2020 to the address in the lower right.

- ☐ **Karl H. Ackermann**, Gibson Woods (IN) Chapter
- ☐ **Loris Damerow**, Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter
- ☐ **Roberta Jannsen**, West Cook (IL) Chapter
- ☐ **Laura Klemm**, Partner-at-Large
- ☐ **Jim Poznak**, West Cook (IL) Chapter
- ☐ **Denise Gehring**, Oak Openings Region (OH) Chapter
- ☐ **Janice Hand**, Partner-at-Large
- ☐ **Matthew Ross**, Partner-at-Large

This is the official ballot for the Board of Directors for Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd. Cast your vote to elect directors to the Board of Directors. You may vote for the full slate (up to eight nominees) by checking the box before each name. All candidates who receive at least 51% of the vote will be elected to the board.

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Book Review

By Tom Small

In his insightful essay on Charles Dickens as a novelist and reformer, George Orwell asks whether Dickens advocates a “change of heart” or a “change of system.” Is he a conservative, or a revolutionary?

We might ask the same questions regarding Douglas W. Tallamy’s new book *Nature’s Best Hope*. Is Tallamy a change-of-heart or a change-of-system reformer?

The most obvious answer is that he is neither. He doesn’t ask for political change: “We don’t need an act of Congress” (p. 219). Nor does he require a change of heart: “We don’t need to love nature, or even like her” (p. 11). We can stay pretty much as we are and as we evolved: a territorial, self-interested, status-seeking species—*Homo sapiens suburbanensis*. The only change required is one of behavior, the only action a matter of “small efforts” (p. 7). The only objective: transformation of half the 45 million acres of turf-grass lawn in the U.S. to an ecologically productive landscape capable of restoring the insect populations vital to our future as a species—Home-grown National Park, right where we “work, live, farm and play” (p. 20). A modest objective? Well, it’s not half-earth in “traditional preserves” as E. O. Wilson would require. That, to Tallamy, is clearly “impossible with the current population size” (p. 24).

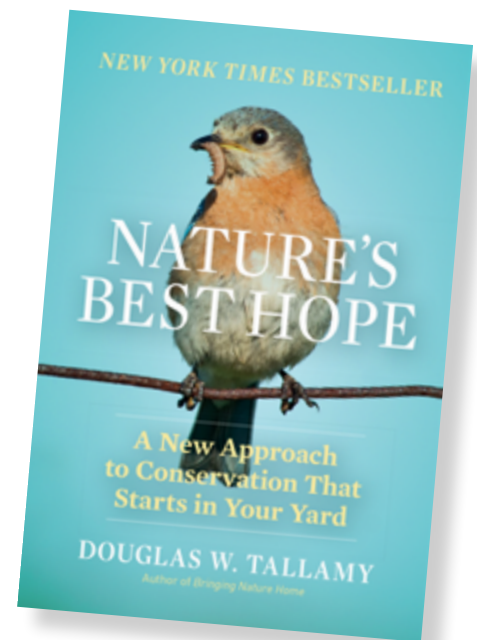
Frankly, I’m suspicious. I suspect that Doug Tallamy, despite his modest claims, is *both* a change-of-heart and a change-of-system reformer. Consider what Tallamy actually asks of us all. We must “abandon our culture of denial” and “get serious about our future on planet earth” (p. 88). A new conservation ethic must

quickly become a “culturally embraced imperative” (p. 13), “part of the everyday culture of us all, worldwide” (p. 36). We require, in short, “cultural transformation” (p. 8).

Tallamy’s best hope is that we all can learn: know the truth and it will make you ... compassionate. But as Jonathan Safran Foer argues in his popular book *We Are the Weather*, there is a perhaps fatal difference between knowing and believing. Clearly, we human beings can know the truth about climate change, or the holocaust, or insect apocalypse and yet not truly believe what we know. For if we believe, we will act and *change accordingly*. Mostly, we don’t. Because we don’t *believe*.

Orwell concluded that Dickens was not “in the accepted sense” a revolutionary. Nor is Tallamy. But when he asks of us, in the peroration to Chapter 6, to “return to a population the earth can support without stressing natural capital on which we depend” and, moreover, to achieve a steady-state economy, he does call us to revolutionary change, a change of system.

Chapter 6 is critical to Tallamy’s entire argument: in it, he makes the case for building “carrying capacity,” which is the number of individuals of a species that a place or system can support “indefinitely, without degrading the local resources” (p. 82). Tallamy is not one to emphasize the bad news; here, however, he provides the worst of it. By the year 2000, we, the human species, had already “destroyed 60% of the earth’s ability to support us.” Worse yet, “we continue to expand our population, our economies, and our needs” (p. 80); thus, we continue destroying the earth’s carrying capacity. Not only



for ourselves, for almost all other species as well.

Tallamy wants us all to be rebuilders — of carrying capacity. The means to that end is the landscape on which we live. Landscape, and plants—*productive* plants. Native plants, of course. *Not just any native, and not just diversity of species.* Functional diversity — the most difficult kind to measure. We do know, however, that only 5% of local plant genera host 70-75% of lepidoptera species. These are “keystone species” that provide by far the greatest amount of productivity and function to the landscape.

No home landscape, no “Home-grown National Park,” is sustainable without keystone species. The oaks are Tallamy’s prime example: host to more lepidoptera species than any other genus; “the best bird feeder” (p. 144); storage for tons of carbon; forage and shelter for more than a thousand other insect species, as well as dozens of vertebrate animals. In *Oak: The Foundation of Civilization* by W.B. Bryant, oaks are considered the foundation for the life and the evolution of entire cultures. Asters and goldenrods are also among Tallamy’s favorite keystone genera, providing countless landscape functions: host to many species of Lepidoptera; resistance to

erosion and drought; winter food for birds; enrichment of the soil; pollen for dozens of specialist bees (pp. 68-69, 173).

In short, if Homegrown National Park is to *function*, if it is to restore carrying capacity for the disappearing insects to which Tallamy devotes his longest and most passionate chapter, we need to have a feeling for the organism, for the flow of the whole system and its full life cycles. We need to plant for the specialist insects; provide continuous bloom from early spring to late fall; and provide groundcover and leaf litter under host trees for the pupation stage, plus decaying logs, snags, standing stems and seeds all winter and spring from last year's growth. And yes, all that will require fundamental change to most people's image of what an urban or suburban landscape is supposed to look like.

So how are we—the true believers—to convince the “uninformed masses” (p. 63) to make this modestly revolutionary change? Basically, we must make the desperate need a matter of “common knowledge” (p. 204) and persuade the masses that action is “for their own good” (p. 63), their self-interest.

Will this be easy? No. Powerful forces block the way. There's the “lawnscaping paradigm” (p. 49), constantly reinforced by the lawnscaping industry. There's also that ingrained adversarial worldview and its corollary, the failed “conservation ethic,” both founded on the notion that nature is apart from us, out there—to be overcome, or “preserved,” or saved, one endangered species at a time (pp. 29-35).

Nor is implementation itself an easy process. In his final chapter, “What Each of Us Can Do,” Tallamy beautifully summarizes the entire enterprise: 10 “concrete steps” to make Homegrown National Park a

successful reality. Shrinking the Lawn is just step one.

Tallamy well understands that what he proposes is the “most ambitious restoration initiative ever undertaken.” We must “renature our surroundings,” not somewhere else but right where we “live, work, farm and play.” We must popularize “a new national pastime,” provide “a goal that unites,” replace our current mentality with a new ethic, and play “a role in life's salvation” (p. 214). That entails changing our image of ourselves, which is both seemingly easy and terribly difficult, and largely a matter of motivation.

Perhaps, like Dickens, Tallamy's true target is in fact human nature. Or perhaps his appeal is to our better nature. Perhaps, like Dickens, Tallamy is, in Orwell's words, “a man who is generously angry”—angry with all of us. And wonderfully, beautifully generous.

In this, his third book, Tallamy has once again, even more powerfully, provided the persuasive evidence and argument, and the motivation. He has generously shared, once again, his knowledge, his passion, his tireless commitment, his *belief*. “Believe me,” he pleads, “we can do this. All we need is the motivation” (p. 228).

It doesn't finally matter whether we call it a change of heart or a change of system, a change of behavior or a revolution. What matters is whether we have the “collective wisdom” Tallamy asks of us, and whether we truly *believe* him. That depends entirely on our wholehearted commitment, and our actions.

Tom Small is a retired professor of English literature, co-founder of the Wild Ones Kalamazoo Area (Michigan) Chapter and co-author of “Using Native Plants to Restore Community,” now in its fourth printing.



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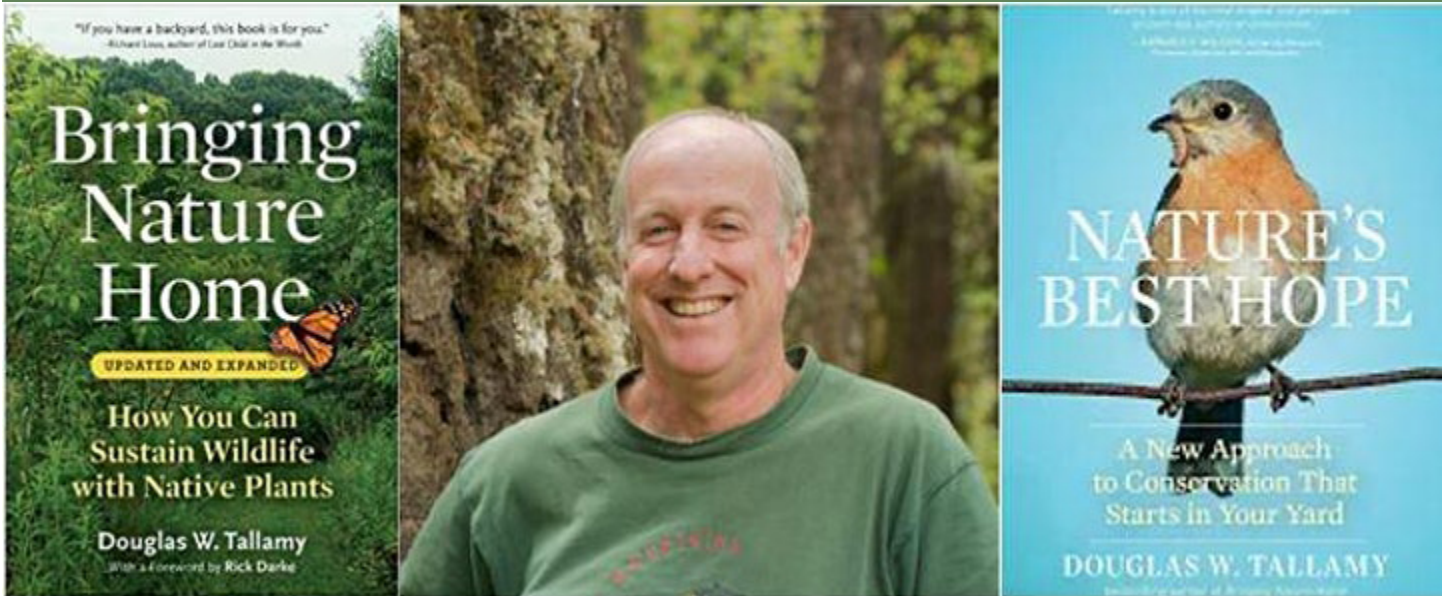


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Bees, Birds and Bouquets

By Mariette Nowak

A garden of native flowers supports bees, birds and butterflies with pollen, nectar, fruit and seeds. These same flowers and fruits, moreover, can be harvested judiciously for use in creating beautiful floral arrangements for the home.

There is a dynamic new movement toward the use of local and seasonal flowers in floral design. I applaud this growing movement, but want to take the trend one step further toward the use of native plants for their superior value in supporting wildlife.

Growing native plants is more important than ever before. Native plants have co-evolved with our wildlife and can best provide them with the food, habitat and cover they require for survival. Bees, butterflies, birds and mammals are declining as a result of lost habitat and the lack of nutritious food offered by native plants.

Many animals, in fact, cannot survive on nonnative flora. Native insects, for example, usually do not have the enzymes to digest nonnative plants with which they have not evolved. Many, like the monarch caterpillars that can only survive on milkweed plants, specialize in particular species or family of plants to which they've "learned" to adapt.

Recent research has also found that chickadees require 70% native vegetation if they are to nest successfully. Without native plants, they can't find the insects needed for their nestlings' survival. No one realized that by planting cultivated, non-native plants we are actually starving our birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

At the same time we grow nutritious native plants for wildlife in gardens, we can also bring a few indoors to enjoy them up close. We can show off the beauty of native plants by creating gorgeous fra-

grant floral arrangements, providing close-up views for family and guests alike. It can be another way for Wild Ones members to promote the use of native plants in landscaping. People often better appreciate the outstanding beauty of our native plants when they see them in the vase, up close and personal.

Harvesting judiciously does not necessarily diminish the benefits of

native plants for wildlife. Flowers often bloom again after their first blossoms are harvested, providing a new supply of pollen and nectar for insects and hummingbirds. Shrubs, too, can benefit from some pruning, since most flowering and fruiting occurs on new growth. In addition, careful cutting can be a boon to your garden plants, improving air circulation and sunlight penetration.



Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) is paired here with mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*) in an Ikebana style arrangement using a pin holder in the shallow vase. The plants are in the mint family and their leaves can be used in teas. The green stems are scouring rush horsetail (*Equisetum hyemale*).

The 10 best native plants for fresh-cut flowers

1. Prairie Blazing Star (*Liatris pycnostachya*)
2. Purple coneflower and pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea* and *Echinacea pallida*)
3. Butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
4. Black-eyed Susan, Brown-eyed Susan and Sweet Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*, *Rudbeckia triloba* and *Rudbeckia subtomentosa*)
5. Foxglove Beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*)
6. Goldenrod (*Solidago species*)
7. Aster (*Symphyotrichum [Aster] species*)
8. Wild Blue Indigo and wild cream indigo (*Baptisia australis* and *Baptisia bracteata*)
9. Sneezeweed or Helen's Flower (*Helenium autumnale*)
10. Yellow coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*)



Above, left to right: Blue Flag Iris (*Iris virginica*), set off with the leaves of Missouri Gooseberry (*Ribes missouriense*), is arranged in an Ikebana style in this wicker basket; Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) interspersed with snippets of Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) are arranged in this charming wheelbarrow from Goodwill; Canada Anemone or windflower (*Anemone canadensis*) and Virginia waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*) flower in spring. Right: Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), along with the arching leaves of yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) were easy to arrange in this tall vase. Purple coneflower is a favorite of butterflies when in blossom and finches when in seed.

By planting native wildflowers, shrubs and trees, gardeners can enjoy indoor bouquets of gorgeous native wildflowers, and, at the same time, ensure that our native flora and fauna continue to grace their lives.

In the floral designs illustrated here, I have used plants native to the Midwest. But many of them have counterparts within the same genus in other parts of the country. Plant and use your own local species and consider these floral arrangements as inspiration for designs using the flora native to your own backyard.

Note: All the flowers in the floral arrangements shown here provide nectar, pollen and seeds for birds, with the exception of anemone, which lacks nectar but has an abundance of pollen.

Mariette Nowak is a member of the Kettle Moraine (Wisconsin) chapter of Wild Ones and is the author of "Birdscaping in the Midwest, published by the University of Wisconsin Press in 2012.



Tips on harvesting, caring for fresh-cut flowers and grasses

1. Use clean tools, pails and vases.
2. Harvest early in the day or at dusk.
3. Water quality: Avoid hard, softened and chlorinated water. Instead, use distilled water, water from a dehumidifier or rainwater
4. Floral preservative: Many native flowers do not do better with preservatives. Instead condition flowers for a few hours after cutting in distilled water with 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach per gallon to initially reduce bacteria. Use only distilled water when arranging in a vase and change the water every few days.



Photo by Terry Priest/Flickr



Photo by Victoria Borodnova/Pixabay

Fireflies light up our lives

By Donna Van Buecken

Fireflies, or lighting bugs as my dad used to call them, are a glowing. We usually see them from the middle of June into July in our backyard.

Fireflies, however, are actually not flies at all; they are beetles. There are over 170 species of this awesome insect found in North America with most of them found east of the Mississippi — they like moist soils and decaying organic matter where slugs and worms and other larvae live.

Why moist soils and decaying organic matter?

Adult female fireflies lay their eggs in moist soil. After they emerge a few weeks later, the larvae live in the moist soil or beneath decaying organic litter eating slugs, worms and other soft bodied insect larvae. After a year or more, during the late spring, the larvae will pupate underground and emerge as adults ready to mate. That's when the dance of the fireflies begins.

We are fortunate our backyard is compromised by only a little stray urban light. So as dusk settles in, the fireflies flicker over our prairie and lawn. They are signaling their desire to mate.

Pollinators?

Unfortunately the information about lightning bugs is limited. Adults have mouths designed to eat other bugs

Some think adult fireflies feed on the nectar of plants and flowers as they age. They could be both predators that eat other bugs and pollinators of plants.

Like pollinators in general, firefly populations are in decline. When we first planted our prairie, we saw hundreds in the evenings; now we're lucky if we see five to eight in an evening. "Average temperature and rain fall amounts, pesticide usage, artificial lighting along streets and the outside of homes, amount of organic litter and loss of habitat including the expanses of lawn where female firefly cannot lay eggs, all influence firefly survival," according to [Pollinators – Welcome](#). "There is also some evidence that firefly populations do not move away from where they started life, so local populations once lost completely do not recover on their own."

Backyard habitat

Knowing that fireflies like moist soil and decaying organic matter gives us a hint about what we can do to help attract fireflies to our yards. Leave part of a downed tree or two, and the natural litter that comes from living ones. Mow your lawn at 3 inches or higher; fireflies like to mate in long grass. Provide a water source like a small water feature, pond or stream. Avoid using pesticides. And

Above: Fireflies light up a forest. New medical research injecting firefly chemicals into human cells studies diseases such as cancer, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, etc. Inset: Fireflies are living "glow sticks." Studying fireflies is how researchers figured out what chemicals to use to develop glow sticks.

most importantly, reduce light pollution as much as possible.

We love to see the fireflies on a warm, humid night. They raise our spirits and bring smiles to our faces; they help us remember the good 'ol days when we were young and full of energy. I hope they never fade away!

And if you want to be wowed without leaving the comfort of your home, check out this video — <https://earthsky.org/earth/video-synchronized-symphony-of-fireflies>. For a few short weeks each year, [Elkmont Ghost Town](#) in Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee becomes the site of a magnificent synchronized firefly gathering. This video, which premiered on BBC Earth, was released in 2016 as part of [SKY-GLOW](#), a crowdfunded project to explore the effects and dangers of urban light pollution.

Donna VanBuecken retired in 2015 as Wild Ones' first Executive Director. She currently serves on the Board of the Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter and as an Honorary Director of Wild Ones.

Bucket marketing helps to publicize chapter's work



By Janice Hand and Marti Agler

Like all other organizations, Wild Ones chapters continually seek the best ways to market and publicize their work. The Wild Ones Smoky Mountain Chapter in East Tennessee uses a notable – and innovative – approach. Bucket marketing!

Two years ago, amidst discussions of ways to raise funds beyond their annual calendar, one board member said, "How about buckets?" Receiving raised eyebrows and no other viable solutions, he offered to research costs and report back. What he found was that printing decals and buying 5-gallon buckets could easily be done for under \$5 each, with a \$10 sale price. The chapter's board decided to give it a try and found excellent success, but for marketing, not fundraising. Over two years, the chapter's raised only about \$135.

Smoky Mountain Chapter takes its buckets to table events, such as the Wild Ones Tennessee Valley Chapter's March symposium, and finds that a stack of the white buckets is eye-catching, bringing visitors to the table to talk about Wild Ones. The chapter also uses the buckets at fall events such as the fall plant swap, filled with showy native blooms like cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), tall ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*), American wild carrot (*Daucus pusillus*), and Blue Ridge goldenrod (*Solidago spithamea*), and finds that their bucket displays

are real show-stoppers. The chapter gifts their meeting speakers with a bucket, too.

The chapter also donates its buckets. One of its most successful donations was to the University of Tennessee Gardens-Knoxville, which posted a list of needed supplies that included buckets. The Smoky Mountains Chapter immediately donated a dozen, which are still in use throughout the garden by interns and others. The impact is that not only do garden interns learn about Wild Ones (and go across the nation back to college or new jobs), but garden visitors see the buckets all over the site, too. Since the garden is a plant testing garden and is heavily visited, somewhere around 100,000 people a year see Wild Ones' buckets in use.

With now two years of experience, what advice does the Smoky Mountains Chapter offer? Chapter member and national board member Marti Agler counsels: "Do this as marketing, not fundraising and remember to have fun with it. Since many gardeners already have a collection of 5-gallon buckets, we stress the fact that these support a good cause. And, interestingly, people like that our buckets are 'food-grade' – that's a selling point."

Janice Hand is a PAL and the former national Wild Ones Board president, while Marti Agler is a national board member and Smoky Mountain chapter member.

The Smoky Mountain Chapter has found success marketing Wild Ones and its chapter through the use of buckets with the Wild Ones logo.

Landscape in Progress projects are one of the most popular members-only activities of the Tennessee Valley (Tennessee) Chapter.

By Barbara A. Schmitz

What do you do when your Wild Ones chapter is spread a little too large geographically, making it difficult for members to attend meetings and activities regularly?

For some Wild Ones chapters the answer is to spin off new chapters, or saplings.

Outreach Coordinator Susan Leahy said the idea for the St. Louis (Missouri) chapter to spin off a new chapter came about because they had some members from St. Charles. "It's pretty far to go and there was no chapter there, despite the area having a huge population," she said. "We just figured there had to be an audience we could tap into."

So in February 2019, when the St. Charles County Master Gardeners annually holds a gardening event, members of the St. Louis chapter set up a table with a Wild Ones display. "We took names, emails and phone numbers of people who were interested, and by the end we had three pages... We realized then that there was enough interest to start a chapter," Leahy said.

With the help of one of their current St. Charles members, they reserved a meeting place, set up an organizational meeting, and emailed everyone on the list, she said. They also reached out to other like-minded organizations in St. Louis and asked for the names of their members who lived in the St. Charles area.

"We said this is just a one-time thing, and that their members would only get one email, but we invited them to come to our organizational meeting, too."

More than 30 attended that first meeting, and Leahy said she first gave a brief talk about natives and explained what Wild Ones was, including its chapter requirements. "I had made a sign-up sheet of various things they could check if they



Photo by Bill Moll

Chapters starting new chapters or saplings

were interested," she said. "Things like hosting a gathering, holding an officer position..."

At first, people weren't too quick to sign up, Leahy acknowledged, but with a little bit of prodding, they agreed to hold an event at their home, or to become an officer with the new organization.

By March 2019, the group held its first organizational meeting, and today has dedicated officers and regular activities. "The chapter is going strong and has already moved from seedling to full-fledged chapter," Leahy said.

Leahy and President Marsha Gebhardt occasionally meet with the new chapter officers, or offer guidance when asked, as well as give the chapter access to their speaker's bureau at no cost.

This year the two chapters are also working together to do a landscape challenge that includes a front yard makeover with native plants. "We'll mentor them through the process," Leahy said, noting that COVID-19 will likely push the challenge back.

Leahy said follow up is key for other chapters trying to spin off a



Bill Hulse, center, prepares volunteers at one of the Tennessee Valley (Tennessee) Chapter's Landscape in Progress projects.

new chapter. "Obviously, you need to look at the geographic breakdown," she said. And once you identify an area for a new chapter, look for some type of garden club sale or other event that would draw the type of people you hope to attract to the new chapter.

"Set up the right display — and maybe include some live plants — and take names, phone numbers and email addresses," Leahy said. "Don't talk to people and let them walk away."

Most importantly, in a timely manner, get back to those people who expressed an interest. "Tell them you're having an organizational meeting and you'd love to have them come and learn more about natives," she said. "Wild Ones is structured differently than other groups, and they'll want to be part of it. But if they discover it's not for them, they've only wasted a couple hours."

Bill Moll of the Tennessee Valley (Tennessee) chapter helped to start Nashville's Wild Ones chapter.

Moll said the Tennessee Valley chapter had about 20 members who were from Nashville. But with a 135

mile drive those members seldom attended chapter activities, let alone Monday night meetings.

But Nashville has a lot of resources, such as native plant nurseries and universities with field botany programs, so the interest in native landscaping already existed, Moll said. He worked with three or four others to start the new chapter, first going through old mailing lists to

find every person who had ever been in Wild Ones in the five-county area. A nature center agreed to provide the new group a meeting place at no cost, and the Tennessee Valley chapter provided the seedling with \$250 to start off with.

"We helped them work through the process," he said. "We encouraged them and pushed them to get the forms to national."

Emily Campbell, left, gives directions at one of the Tennessee Valley (Tennessee) Chapter's Landscape in Progress projects.





Left, top: The St. Louis (Missouri) Chapter holds an annual native plant sale. Left, bottom: The St. Louis (Missouri) Chapter members plant native plants at a recent Landscape Challenge planting.



Almost immediately, about 20 members from Tennessee Valley transferred to the sapling, so dues money started flowing in, he said.

"But if it hadn't been for the people up there, and sitting down together to do the organization and plan the first couple meetings, it wouldn't have worked," Moll said. Eventually, he hopes the two chapters can work together.

However, Moll wasn't as successful when he tried to start a Memphis chapter. "We came so close ... but all the interested people were already active in other groups such as the Memphis Botanic Garden or Overton Park..." In the end, those interested decided there simply wasn't time for Wild Ones, too.

But Moll doesn't give up easi-

ly. He's now looking to other areas where no Wild Ones chapters exist to start sapling chapters. "If you have just one or two people to step up, it won't fly," he said. "You need at least three or four people to step up and be leaders."

Moll said it's easiest to start a chapter if you can piggyback off similar organizations, such as the Master Gardener program. "In our case, the Master Gardener program got bigger and bigger and outgrew the Master Gardener structure," he said. That group found the Wild Ones and became the Tennessee Valley chapter. "Starting from scratch is a lot tougher."

Pam Todd, of the West Cook (Illinois) chapter, was on the receiving end of another's chapter's willingness

to grow the native plant organization. The DuPage chapter helped them start the new chapter.

Todd said she became interested in native plants after hearing Doug Tallamy speak at a convention. He told her that she needed to learn more about Wild Ones, so she and a friend contacted the "school moms" who help take care of school gardens, and the group went out for coffee. The consensus from the group: "Let's do it."

The national office connected their group to the DuPage chapter president, who visited them and gave advice on what they should do. The sapling chapter started offering programs, developing a "solid board" as they continued to "do a ton of tabling" events to grow membership and visibility.

Their membership got a big boost when someone stepped up to be membership director and did a lot of personal outreach. As members grew, so, too, did the number of activities the chapter held — from native garden tours to plant, shrub and tree sales, to a conference held every other year, to starting their own grant program and more.

For other chapters just starting out, Todd recommends you welcome people in and learn their names, regardless of whether they are ready to become members. "First, entice them with a beautiful garden and maybe follow up on social media as you try to get them to attend a meeting," she said. "But even if they don't become members, they will at least help spread the word."

Todd says it's all about relationships, especially when you're putting on events. "If they show up regularly to volunteer for a one-day event, ask them to be on a committee. Thank them for their time and contribution. Be respectful and find ways that they want to contribute."



Trail by Belmont Prairie Nature Preserve, Downer's Grove, IL

"The ... world becomes even more beautiful the closer you look. All it takes is attention and knowing how to look."

— Robin Wall Kimmerer

Looking for light on the prairie

What stories does a feather have to tell?

Jeff and I are hiking Belmont Prairie; our last hike, it turns out, for a while. As we follow the shallow stream to where it disappears, the feather comes into focus at my feet. It looks unreal, with its

polka-dotted edge and its graceful arch. Such a lovely silken feather, lying in the mud. I wonder. Who did it belong to? Later, I text a photo of it to a birder friend. Downy or hairy woodpecker most likely, he tells me. I wonder at the stories this feather could tell.

Once, this feather embodied flight. It provided warmth and waterproofing. Now, it is grounded. Soon, it will disappear into the prairie soil and be unremembered. Except by me.

I've felt sad this week. A deep grief. There has been so much loss as the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths continue to increase nationwide and worldwide.

My usual remedy for sadness and uncertainty is to go to "my" prairies and walk, journal and think. But the options for hiking have narrowed this week. My prairie stewardship is on hold because of our shelter in place orders. One prairie where I lead a regular work group is closed. Another, requires extensive travel, and I'm no longer comfortable with the idea of driving 90 miles each way. Scientific research and monitoring is halted until the end of the month. Or longer.

And now, a walk on Belmont Prairie—not far down the road from where I live—is becoming an adven-



Hairy woodpecker feather, Belmont Prairie Nature Preserve, Downer's Grove, IL



Left: Footbridge over the stream through Belmont Prairie Nature Preserve, Downer's Grove, IL; Right: Marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), author's backyard pond, Glen Ellyn, IL.

ture of the sort I don't want. Narrow trails. Too many hikers. Each of us is painfully aware of not getting too close to the other.

Today, instead of enjoying my walk here, I feel tense. A hiker appears in front of me, wearing earbuds. I step deep into the tallgrass and we smile at each other as he passes. *Too close*. Another arrives on a bike. Seeing me, she veers away. A bridge requires single file passage. Because there has been no prescribed burn due to the shelter in place, it's difficult to see someone until we almost run into each other.

This, I come to understand as I walk, will be my last hike here for a while. Looks like our backyard prairie may be the best place for Jeff and me for the immediate future.

Later, I try to sit with my grief over yet another loss. The loss of beloved places. I try not to ignore my feelings. Not set them aside. But I let myself feel this grief for a few

moments. It's slightly terrifying. My old ways of coping by "going for a hike on the prairie" are no longer available. I realize I have a choice. I can be angry at what's closed off to me. I can be depressed at what's been taken away. Or...

I can be grateful for what I do have.

I don't want you to think I'm being Polyanna-ish about this. I've been mad and sad this week. I mourned when my stewardship work was put on hold, and cried when my other prairie was closed to visitation, science work and stewardship. These were good decisions by good organizations—made for the health of people. But tough for those of us who love a particular place. Each loss hurt—to not see the emerging pasque flowers bud and bloom, to miss the first crinkled shoots of wood betony pushing through the prairie soil. To not watch the killdeer return. The emerald

scrub brushes of newly emerging prairie dropseed will be long and lush before I'm hiking those trails again.

The solace of these familiar and beloved places is no longer available to me. I can choose to continue to be unhappy about this. Or I can take account of what I do have.

What I do have is a backyard. I have my walks. 'Round and 'round and 'round the block we go each morning, Jeff and I, soaking up the surprisingly diverse natural world of our neighborhood. Grassy lawns full of common wild violets, our Illinois state wildflower.

Lawns – some full of diversity, others into monocultured submission thanks to chemicals. Some are power-edged sharply along sidewalks with volcano-mulched trees, aggressively brought to obedience.

Others are softer, more natural. An eastern-cottontail munches clover in one yard against a backdrop of

daffodils. We hear loud cries, and look up as sandhill cranes fly over, somewhere above the bare silver maple limbs etched across blue skies and altocumulus clouds. Like stained glass windows to another world we can only dimly perceive.

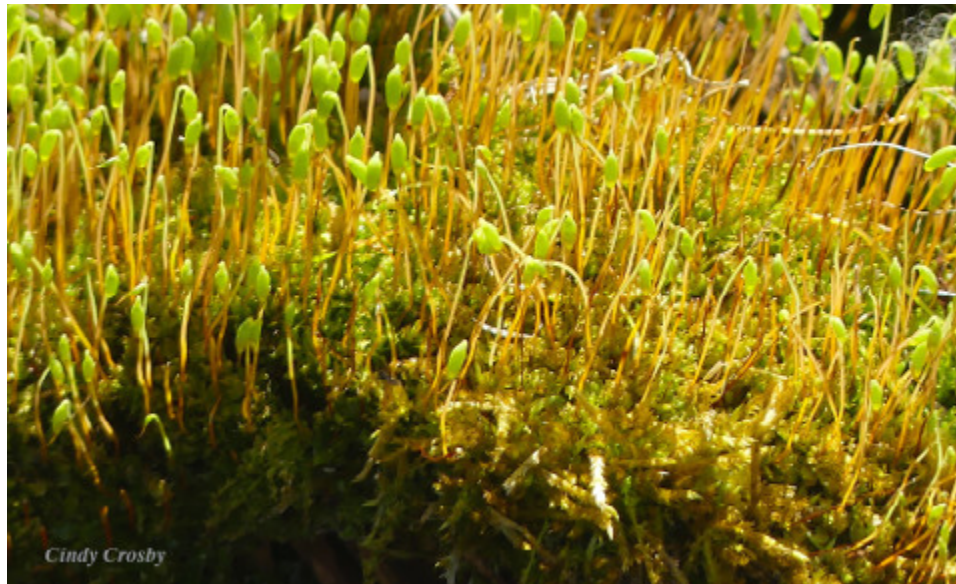
In the cracks of the driveways and the sidewalks blooms a tiny flower. I'm not sure if it's early Whitlow grass or common chickweed. My iNaturalist app isn't sure of the ID either. I count the petals, and when I return home, consult my field guides. Chickweed has five petals, deeply cleft, which look like 10 at a glance, my guide tells me. Early Whitlow grass, I read, has four petals, deeply cleft, looking as if they are eight petals.

Chickweed it is!

As I walk, I think about the backyard that will be my "hiking spot" for the foreseeable future. When we moved in, and I met our neighbor Gerould Wilhelm, co-author of *"Flora of the Chicago Region,"* I asked his advice. What was the best way to learn native plants of our area? He told me, *"Key out one plant in your backyard a day, Cindy. By the time a year has passed, you'll know 365 plants."* It was great advice, and I took it—for a while. Then I quit. Now might be the time to put my backyard ID into more regular practice.

I walk through my yard, looking. Over there in the prairie patch—new growth of rattlesnake master and shooting star. And —*oh no*—buckthorn! Garlic mustard has infiltrated the prairie patch, pond and garden beds. While my attention was elsewhere doing my stewardship work removing invasives the past few years, these bad-boy plants crept into my yard.

As I slosh through the wetter areas of the yard, I'm reminded that our house is on the downslope of three other homes in our suburban subdivision. Water, water, everywhere. Our raised beds have helped us solve the problem of growing



Top: Unknown moss (but hopefully not for long!), Belmont Prairie Nature Preserve, Downer's Grove, IL;
Bottom: Goldfinches (*Spinus tristis*) at the feeder, author's backyard, Glen Ellyn, IL.

vegetables in the "swamp." My little hand-dug pond, sited at the lowest point of the yard, holds some of the water and provides great habitat for western chorus frogs, dragonflies and damselflies and marsh marigolds on the perimeter.

I sit in a patch of sunshine. A cardinal pours out his heart to his lady-love. Goldfinches chitter and chat, then swarm the thistle feeder, resplendent in their brightening plumage.

It's good to feel a connection with my backyard. A kinship with the natural world. ID'ing flowers, feeling the warmth of the sun and listening to birdsong reminds me that

I'm not alone. I needed that reminder right now. You, too?

We're in this together, so keep looking for the light. It's there.

Keep watching for signs of hope. Pay attention.

Hope and light are all around us. We only need to look.

Wild Ones member Cindy Crosby is the author, compiler or contributor to more than 20 books, none self-published. Her latest book is "Tallgrass Conversations: In Search of the Prairie Spirit." (with co-author Thomas Dean, Ice Cube Press, April 2019). Read more at <https://cindy-crosby.com/>.

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