

A voice for the  
natural landscaping  
movement.

Working toward  
the next four decades of  
growing native plants and  
restoring natural landscapes.



# Wild Ones®

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

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COVER PHOTO:  
Elaine Krizenesky  
Snow on plants

# JOURNAL

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

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## NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT



Janice Hand, President

**I** do you have one, too? On the top of my desk, I have a bright yellow file titled "Periodic Review." It is specific to Wild Ones and contains articles, pictures, thought-provoking emails and letters – items that I didn't want to read just once and risk forgetting. So, periodically, I pull out the file and thumb through it. More often than not, I find something that reminds me or inspires me.

One of the things I found in my file this last time is the Wild Ones statement of five values – Respect, Personalized Support, Volunteer Appreciation, The Value of Members, and Being Fresh and Adaptable. I read the explanation for each and realized that the information is important for *all* of us to reconsider periodically. Let me share the five values, slightly reworded:

**1 Respect.** We will treat each other with respect at all times. After all, our mission stems from respect for the other species on this planet and future generations. We will respect different tastes in landscaping, but also ask that others show respect for the common good in conserving resources and improving the environment by including native plants in their landscapes.

I suspect that this value is the most important of the five. This one is basically "treat others as you wish to be treated," which goes for not only other people, but our wider environment, too.

**2 Personalized support.** Our members value direct contact with other Wild Ones members and the ability to learn locally. Networking

and education are our most important functions and set us apart from similar organizations.

The truth is that Wild Ones competes with other organizations that help people select native plants. But not one of them – *none* – has the network of hands-on, experienced and helpful members to back up their website lists. And not only that, but our members are friendly and supportive, too.

**3 Appreciation** – Volunteers are the heart of Wild Ones. To keep dues low and efforts local, we are a grass-roots organization running primarily on volunteer effort. We rely on volunteers to carry our mission forward and we will support our volunteers and recognize their efforts, especially those in volunteer leadership positions.

I have the happy job of writing president's thank-you notes and emails to donors, board members and other volunteers, and I will tell you I struggle with it. Not in being thankful, but in how to express my heart-felt appreciation in ways that resonate with the individual. How do I tell someone they have really made a difference and ensure that they know those are not just words, but my feelings? I did some research and decided that there is no magic formula—just be genuine. But I know that such notes do make a difference since I received a note last week from the leader of another nonprofit to whom I give time. It sure made my month!

**4 All members are valuable members.** At the national level, our income is almost all from members' dues and donations. We appreciate all members, respecting that everyone has varying priorities and demands on their time and money that impacts their ability to donate and to volunteer.

It seems to me that this value reinforces No. 3, appreciation. This value statement says that our

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.



organization truly appreciates and values those who give in ways both small and large. I know I'm not alone in that I originally joined Wild Ones to assist its mission and then found that just attending meetings wasn't enough. I wanted to help more, do more, and see that I made a real difference. Not the chosen path for everyone, of course, but I do encourage you to expand the ways you are valuable. The payoff is heart-felt.

**5 Fresh and adaptable.** We always want ideas from our members, our Board and our honorary directors for new strategies that we can use to further our goal of promoting sustainable landscape practices. This is the value that you will see getting a lot of attention in the upcoming year. The reason is that we must renovate our membership service levels, and a large part of that will be more adaptable technology.

Since technology is only going to do what we tell it to do, we will need to be both comprehensive and accurate in defining our systems requirements. To do this, we will be reaching out to chapters asking for representation on a Technology

Assistance Group committee. Chapter reps will provide advice on needed functions, processes, format, timing and best practices. This will give us a fresh way of looking at member services and ensure chapter needs are met. This may be packaged software and/or custom programming. The result – technology that will be effective, efficient and adaptable for our future. We will be reaching out to you and your chapter as a whole to ask for ideas about how Wild Ones can improve its reach and effectiveness. More on that later.

By the time you read this column, hopefully you will have seen Wild Ones' 2017 Annual Report, delivered at the Aug. 19 Annual Meeting. Chapter presidents and vice presidents received it in early October, with a reminder to share it with members. I encourage you to read the Annual Report so you have the background on where we started this year and where we came after a year of potholes. Then, I'd like you to start thinking about where YOU want the organization to go in 2018.

Naturally yours,

*Janice*

.....

**Help  
Wild Ones Gain Speed in 2018  
with your  
generous donation.**

Don't miss the opportunity to participate in the Wild Ones annual year-end appeal – the Appeal packet is in the mail.

Your support determines **how fast – and how far** – Wild Ones will get down the road. Whether you give a single donation or support Wild Ones with recurring payments, **you will make a very large difference.**

## WILD ONES JOURNAL

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She is self-employed as a graphic designer in Wisconsin and is a member of Wild Ones Kettle Moraine chapter. She has dual degrees in commercial and advertising art, as well as horticultural science.

Deb, on behalf of all of Wild Ones – staff, board and members – thank you for your contributions to the organization. You've made a very visible mark on us and we appreciate each and every hour you gave to Wild Ones.

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**Thank you for your  
commitment and support!**

# Gardening in a changing climate

With an increasingly  
erratic environment,  
find out

what you  
can expect

and

what you  
can do

on your little piece  
of the globe

Late snow or early bloom? Neither  
option is good for plants such as  
this *Sanguinaria canadensis*.

PHOTO: WILD ONES

By Bert Cregg

The topic of climate change has come to permeate all facets of our lives. From the evening news to social media, discussions of carbon footprint and global warming are never far away. Although public controversy continues to swirl around climate change, the scientific consensus on climate change is solid. In a recent Pew Research Center survey, 87 percent of scientists indicated they believe the earth is getting warmer because of human activity. With the unrelenting media focus on changing weather patterns, many people are wondering whether it's time to change the way they garden.

## The shape of things to come

The use of fossil fuels has undeniably increased the amount of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and methane in the atmosphere. Since the Industrial Revolution, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels have increased from around 280 parts per million to over 400 ppm. This shift alone has the potential to impact plants and gardening. During photosynthesis, leaves take up CO<sub>2</sub> to produce sugars for plant growth, storage and defense. Most plants, however, increase their photosynthetic rate as CO<sub>2</sub> increases well beyond 400 ppm, resulting in a "CO<sub>2</sub> fertilization" effect. Not surprisingly, many fast-growing, weedy, or invasive plants are often better able to take advantage of this growth boost than desirable garden plants.


The other issue with increasing CO<sub>2</sub> is its ability to trap heat near the earth's surface. By now, most people are familiar with some of the most widely cited projections that average global temperatures will rise by up to 2 degrees C (3.8 degrees F) by the middle of this century. The challenge for gardeners looking into the future, however, is much more than just rising temperatures. Two key concerns are increasing temperatures in winter and increasing weather extremes.

One often-overlooked aspect of climate change is that winter minimum temperatures are rising faster than overall average temperatures. For those of us in northern sections of the country, this may seem like a good thing. Who wouldn't want a warmer winter? But increasing winter temperatures have a couple of important negative impacts. First, warmer winters allow the northward spread of insect pests whose distributions are currently limited by minimum winter temperatures. For example, research in Massachusetts and Connecticut demonstrated that overwinter survival of hemlock woolly adelgid increased with increasing temperatures, suggesting the range of this devastating pest would move northward in response to warmer winters. Second, warmer winters have resulted in longer growing seasons for trees and shrubs due to earlier bud break. Again, this may seem like a good thing at first blush, but it could have a dire impact on fruit production since early flowering increases the potential for damage from spring frosts. As example of this was the severe frost damage that ruined cherry, peach and other fruit tree crops when April frosts followed one of the warmest months of March on record in the eastern half of the United States in 2012.

The other disconcerting part of climate change for gardeners is that weather patterns will not just become warmer in the future, but will also become increasingly extreme and erratic. While global models predict general warming, the probabilities also increase for more intense, longer-lasting droughts and more extreme heavy rainfalls. Some scientists have also suggested that climate change may result in instability in jet stream patterns that could increase the frequency of polar vortex events such as the ones that produced record cold temperatures in early 2014 and 2015.

*continued on page 6*





For small lawns, consider using a reel push mower. Burning 1 gallon of gasoline releases 20 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere.

## How to keep from being part of the problem

### Store carbon.

One way that gardeners can impact greenhouse gases is by increasing the carbon storage of their gardens and landscapes. As most people are aware, trees and shrubs remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere and store the carbon in their wood tissue. This helps to reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere, at least temporarily, until the wood is burned or decomposes.

Many “best trees for carbon storage” lists on the Internet focus on fast-growing trees since they are the most effective at converting CO<sub>2</sub> to wood. But fast-growing trees are often, though not always, short-lived, meaning the carbon they store will ultimately end up back in the atmosphere more quickly than slower-growing and longer-lived trees. Therefore, planting longer-lived trees such as oaks (*Quercus* spp., Zones 4-10) or beeches (*Fagus* spp, Zones 3-9) will provide long carbon storage.

Another strategy for storing carbon is to increase the organic matter (OM) in your soil. Most gardeners recognize that increasing soil organic matter improves soil's water-holding capacity and retention of mineral nutrients. But soil can also be a tremendous sink for carbon. Increasing the organic matter content of your soil by 1 percent stores 20,000 pounds of carbon per acre. The challenge in increasing soil organic matter, of course, is that microbes in the soil break some of the OM down. However, with regular additions of compost or leaf litter, it may be possible to increase OM of some soils by several percent.

### Reduce emissions.

The largest potential to impact greenhouse gases for most gardens and landscapes is through reduced emissions. Burning 1 gallon of gasoline releases 20 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere. For small lawns, consider using a reel push mower (yes, they still make them) instead of a gas-powered mower, or pick up a rake instead of a leaf blower. If your physical stamina is not up to a push mower, consider an electric model.

For many, eliminating turf from their landscape entirely has become a means to reduce environmental impacts as well as a cause du jour. For those of us who enjoy an expanse of turf for family recreation, there are still ways to reduce our carbon footprint. The first is to reduce, or even eliminate, turf fertilization. Following a typical four-step annual lawn fertilizer program applies the equivalent of 160 pounds of nitrogen per acre, or roughly the same amount that Midwestern farmers apply to an acre of corn. In many situations, turf can be maintained with half that amount of fertilizer or less. This is important when we consider that producing each pound of synthetic nitrogen fertilizer releases about 6 pound of CO<sub>2</sub>. Plus, more fertilizer means more mowing

Converting lawns to beds can further reduce mowing and provide more opportunities to introduce woody plants that can store carbon. Within landscape and garden beds, reduce fertilizer applications or use compost or other organic nutrient sources. Try to place fertilizers in the plant root zone where plants can take them up. Excess soil nitrogen can stimulate soil microbes and result in a belch of CO<sub>2</sub> from the soil. Likewise, avoid recreational tillage. A common misconception is the tillage helps to break up heavy clay soils. In fact, repeated tilling reduces soil structure. Mulching or top-dressing with compost is a more effective way of dealing with heavy soils. Avoid working them, and leave earthworms and freeze-thaw cycles to do the work. Moreover, tilling stimulates soil microbial activity and further increases soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux.

*Reprinted with permission from “Fine Gardening,” August 2017*

For more information on native plants and climate change

[Botanic Gardens Conservation International](#)

[California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)

[National Wildlife Foundation](#)

[University of Toledo](#)

[Wild Ones](#)

## Adapting to change

The projected increased variability in future weather patterns is a daunting challenge for many gardeners. If we only had to contend with consistent, gradual warming, we could simply borrow plants from our southern neighbors. But as the brutal winters of 2014 and 2015 demonstrated, pushing your USDA Hardiness Zone can have alarming consequences. The problem is that plants don't respond to averages; they respond to extremes. There were countless examples of trees and shrubs that flourished during relatively mild winters in the 30 years prior to 2014 that succumbed to winter 2014 or 2015. In Michigan, the carnage included plants such as true cedars (*Cedrus* spp., USDA Hardiness Zones 5-9) and vinifera wine grapes (*Vitis vinifera* and cvs., Zones 6-9). Ultimately, adapting gardening practices to climate change becomes an exercise in managing risk. Like managing other types of risk, diversity is the best tool gardeners have for dealing with climate change.

Maintaining a high level of plant diversity will also provide a hedge against new insect pests that may turn up as their ranges expand. Gardeners can mix in experimental warmer zone plants while building a foundation of the tried-and-true. Annual and herbaceous perennials make good candidates for experimentation since they can exploit longer growing seasons and warmer summers without being subjected to vagaries of a sudden February cold snap. Of course, we tend to want what we can't have, and some homeowners will want to push their Zone for trees and

shrubs as well. The key is not to bet more than you can afford to lose.

Knowing and understanding your site will become increasingly important for gardeners. Nearly all climate models predict an increase in extreme rainfall events. Many stress-tolerant traits in plants are a matter of degrees, but flood tolerance is often a yes/no response. Plants that are not flood tolerant can be lost after even short periods of inundation. Be sure to know what plants need to be kept high and dry.

Recommending mulch in the face of climate change smacks of the old advice to "take two aspirin and call me in the morning," but a proper layer of ground bark or wood chip mulch will become a gardener's best friend as never before. The ability of mulch to conserve moisture will be critical during intense drought, especially in beds where irrigation may not be practical or desired. Our research has shown that mulch can reduce summer soil temperatures by 20 degrees F. In winter, mulch provides an insulating layer that can prevent frost heaving and protect the roots of woody plants and herbaceous perennials. Mulch also helps to keep weeds in check, which will be even more important as weeds become increasingly aggressive. ❁

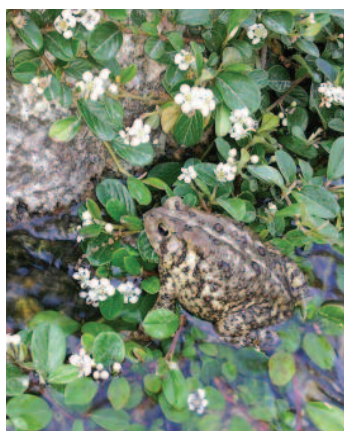
**DR. BERT CREGG** is an associate professor of horticulture and forestry at Michigan State University. His current research includes stress physiology of trees and shrubs in urban environments.

*Reprinted with permission from "Fine Gardening," August 2017*

# Natural Garden Natives®

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*Support Pollinators*



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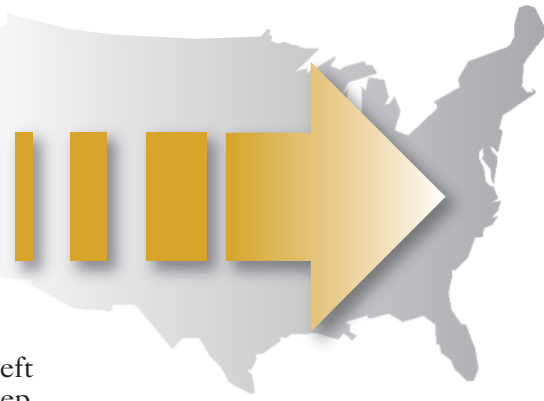
• *naturalgardennatives.com*



# NEWS

from across the

# NATION



## COLORADO

A federal lawsuit filed by a far-left environmental group called Deep Green Resistance seeks to protect the Colorado River by recognizing it as a person with rights.

The lawsuit names the Colorado River ecosystem as the plaintiff. The defendants, the state of Colorado and Gov. John Hickenlooper, are being held liable for violating the river's "right to exist, flourish, regenerate, be restored and naturally evolve," according to the *New York Times*.

If successful, which is unlikely, it could upend environmental law, possibly allowing the redwood forests, the Rocky Mountains or the deserts of Nevada to sue individuals, corporations and governments over resource pollution or depletion, the *Times* reported.



**The Colorado River could be recognized as a person with rights, under a recent lawsuit filed by Deep Green Resistance.**  
PHOTO: Wikimedia.

## DELAWARE

A statistic that nearly half of Delaware's native plants are either threatened or are already gone has caused a legislator to take action.

The *News Journal* reported that Delaware Sen. Stephanie Hansen, an environmental attorney, took action after hearing University of Delaware entomology professor Doug Tallamy speak of the challenges native plants face. She has established the Statewide Ecological Extinction Task Force and plans to introduce legislation in 2018 to reverse the trend.

## MAINE

A new study is showing that Maine's roadside habitats are an important area for pollinators.

The Maine Department of Transportation's Roadside Invasive Plants and Pollinator Study is defining habitats and how those habitats are used by pollinators, *The Bangor Daily News* reported.

"The goal is to learn what we can from the studies about what vegetation we have out there, what type of habitats are along the roads and what habitats are visited and how they are used by pollinators," said Robert Moosmann, statewide vegetation manager with MDOT's bureau of maintenance and operations. "Then we can enhance [roadside] slope environment on the interstate and on other routed roads in the state."

## MARYLAND

Earlier this year, Gov. Larry Hogan signed the Department of Natural Resources — Solar Generation Facilities — Pollinator-Friendly Designation bill into law, which establishes a state preference and a process for locating pollinator-friendly

habitat with commercial ground-mounted solar facilities.

According to the *Fredrick News Post*, the law is significant because an increasing number of solar generating facilities will be installed on agricultural land. Once planted and stabilized with the deep root systems, the eco-system will be self-seeding, have a low maintenance carbon footprint (mowing will not be required as with turf grass), be drought tolerant and provide uninterrupted months of habitat for transient and area pollinators.

## MINNESOTA

More than 220 volunteers helped to inspect dozens of lakes in August to stop the spread of the branched nonnative algae, starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtusa*). Minnesota's newest invasive aquatic species was first detected in 2015.

Like Eurasian milfoil, starry stonewort grows into dense mats that can shroud shallow water, choke out native plants and create a wall between fish and their spawning grounds, the *Star Tribune* reported. Boaters are believed to be spreading the invasive species.

This submersed species began invading the Great Lakes waterways as early as 2008.

## NEW YORK

The U.S. Military Academy and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have joined forces to protect wood and spotted turtles. Both have been nominated for inclusion on the federal list of protected species.

According to the [Defense Video Imagery Distribution System](#), the first-of-its-kind study helps officials to better understand the turtles and their habitat on West Point's property. West Point's interest in pursuing the survey is a matter of course. The Sikes Act, a 1960 law, requires the Department of Defense to manage natural resources on military installations.

## OHIO

Ohio residents can learn more about the benefits of growing prairie habitats for honeybees and support biodiversity through a new webinar. "[An Introduction to Prairie Habitat Creation](#)" is presented by Shana Byrd, director of Conservation at The Dawes Arboretum, and can be viewed for free. 🌻

## BOOK REVIEWS

Looking for holiday gifts for your family and friends who are native plant lovers? Then look no further!

Check out our book reviews of some of the newest and best books on natural landscaping and native plants to see if one (or more) wouldn't be perfect for that hard-to-shop-for person on your list.



And if you decide to purchase on Amazon, you can also provide financial support to the Wild Ones. Simply go to [AmazonSmile](https://www.amazon.com/AmazonSmile) and select Wild Ones – Natural Landscapers Ltd. as your charitable organization. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation of 0.5 percent of the price.

### “Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide”

—BY HEATHER HOLM—

By Laurie Yahr



If you like bees and are planning on buying “*Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide*” as a gift, this new book is so impressive that you’ll want to buy a copy for yourself, too. The 224-page book by Heather Holm includes tree, shrub and perennial plant profiles for the Midwest, Great Lakes and Northeast regions.

Published in 2017 by Pollination Press, LLC, readers can actually see the grains of pollen on the bees in some of the amazing close-up photos. (There are more than 1,500 photos in the book.) The organization and layout using color for tabs, background and sidebars is consistent and pleasing. The grouped comparison photos demonstrate how to differentiate between bees, flies imitating bees and wasps; the technical body parts and features are labeled and easily discerned.

Holm includes 27 genera of bees in five families with key differentiating characteristics and information on their range of sizes and activity periods during the year. Photos and descriptions demonstrate how bees are outfitted to collect pollen; but the book also informs about nest location and provisioning, and life cycle — some with larva shots of brood cells and divisions. She lists common forage plants in each growing season.

In the beginning of the book, Holm lists information on plant strategies for attracting insects: high protein content of some pollen, nectar and oil, flower fragrance and the electric charge flowers produce. Other signals used by flowers to indicate service is no longer needed are accomplished by closing or drying to reduce access to flowers, or even changing color. Bees apparently leave short-lived scent marks that indicate resources are already used. And Holm lists factors impacting the livelihood and survival of native bees: predators, pathogens, fragmentation and habitat loss by development and agriculture, and of course, the use of pesticides. She also includes some strategies to improve opportunities for native bee survival.

The second part of the book features trees, shrubs and forbs and is loaded with information via concise graphics for bloom and fruiting times, habitat, soil, and sunlight preferences and utilization by other insects and birds. Each has range and native distribution maps for the U.S. and Canada.

“*Bees...*” sells for \$24.95 and \$1 for each purchased book is donated to the Wild Bee Squad Fund, which supports native bee research by the University of Minnesota.

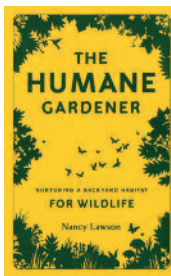
*LAURIE YAHR is a member of the Madison, Wisconsin chapter of Wild Ones and has been writing the chapter’s monthly newsletter since 2001. She and her husband, Rich Kahl, spend most of their free time exploring and photographing the nearby arboretum, or state parks and natural areas in Wisconsin and wherever their travels take them.*

### “The Humane Gardener – Nurturing A Backyard Habitat for Wildlife”

—BY NANCY LAWSON—

By Charlotte Adelman

“*The Humane Gardener*” defies casual note taking, because, along with its



compelling argument for welcoming wildlife, it is packed to the gills with relevant facts and fascinating arguments.

“Many gardeners divide local flora and fauna into two categories: beneficials and pests,” writes “*The*

*Library Journal*.” “Journalist and naturalist Lawson ... challenges readers to erase this distinction. She goes beyond the usual advice to avoid pesticides, encouraging gardeners to plant native plants, let native weeds grow, and welcome all wildlife, even when it eats the plants. This gorgeously written, well-argued title will help backyard gardeners see all creatures, from insects to elk, as visitors to be welcomed rather than pests to be removed. ... Highly recommend for gardeners at all levels in all regions.”

Writing back in 1993, Sara Stein, author of “*Noah’s Garden - Restoring the Ecology of Our Own Backyards*,” described her newly acquired backyard “covered with brambles, bushes, vines and grasses that supported a large and varied animal population.” She and her husband cleared brush and they pulled the vines and brambles. Finally, they had “an expanse of *landscaped* grounds and garden” that seemed to them like Eden.



"Then it hit," she wrote. "I realized in an instant the full extent of what we had done: we had banished the animals from this paradise of ours."

It's now the 21st century. Why haven't gardeners recognized the landscaping practices that harm innocent wildlife? Why isn't Douglas Tallamy a household name? Why do gardeners prefer purple-leaved natives and introductions to native butterfly host plants? Why did Lawson ask her husband to chop the head off a common milkweed?

For answers, Lawson draws on personal experience. "All my years of consuming mainstream gardening publications and TV shows hadn't prepared me for my milkweed sighting, nor had my Master Gardener training," she wrote. "In fact, even at a time when gardeners around the country are clamoring to plant milkweed species to save the monarch butterfly, who can lay her eggs on nothing else, Maryland's Master Gardener manual still lists this plant as a problematic invader." And, that's not all.

Lawson's "heart was mostly in the right place," but "her head was steeped in the marketing ploys of the Landscaping Industrial Complex, not to mention long-ingrained cultural sentiments that divide the world into endless false dichotomies: beneficial insects versus 'pests,' acceptable garden plants versus 'weeds' versus chaos. Feeding a multibillion-dollar industry hawking all manner of poisonous potions and outsized tools is a constant stream of cynical advertisements that prey on our insecurities and cater to our basest fears." The LIC message is "that animals are out to get us, that plants are messy, that humans reluctant to unleash weapons of mass destruction on denizens of the natural world — especially insects — are freaks of nature themselves." Whew! Hearing Lawson tell it like it really is, is really refreshing.

Then she asks: "What happens when we stop? When we spare even the smallest creatures from our sharp blades and stultifying intentions? When we let the fallen leaves be, and the decaying logs lie? When we reject the dominant paradigm of three-shrubs-per-acre of suburban lawn?" She answers, the world "might look a little like the property of" some "humane gardeners." A diverse group, "humane gardeners embody the ethic of compassionate landscaping, challenging long-held assumptions about animals, plants and themselves." The "growing body of research" that validates

their efforts reveals "the importance of such home gardens to pollinator diversity" and demonstrates "the power of native plants to sustain many more animals than the typical suburban yard." Having Lawson deem me a humane gardener and include me in her inspirational book is a cherished honor! Humane gardeners are fortunate to have a spokeswoman as eloquent as Lawson. Read her book and spread the word!

The 224-page hardcover book, released in April 2017, was published by Princeton Architectural Press.

**CHARLOTTE ADELMAN**, a retired attorney, along with her husband, **Bernie Schwartz**, is co-author of "*The Midwestern Native Garden: Native Alternatives to Nonnative Flowers and Plants*" and "*Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees, Gardening Alternatives to Nonnative Species, An Illustrated Guide*."

### "Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees"

—BY CHARLOTTE ADELMAN AND BERNARD SCHWARTZ—

By Barbara A. Schmitz

As a writer, I can appreciate the time that goes into researching a topic.



But the time that went into researching Charlotte Adelman and Bernard Schwartz's new 448-page book, "*Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees*," was clearly extensive. And that's why it should be a staple in your home library. If you want to know something about a native Midwestern shrub or tree, it's undoubtedly in there.

Like their book on flowers and plants that came before, "*The Midwestern Native Garden*," Adelman and Schwartz promote native shrubs and trees to replace the nonnative ones that people are accustomed to planting in their yards. But it's the book's organization — offering native alternatives to the nonnative shrubs and trees in your yard — that makes it a keeper on your bookshelf.

Even better is that it is organized by seasons and includes a plethora of photos (nearly 500, in fact) of what shrubs and trees look like in the various times of the year.

After reading it for just an hour, I already had a dozen or so torn-up pieces of

paper serving as bookmarks, marking pages I wanted to go back to. Within two hours, there were so many yellow bits of paper sticking out that it was impossible to even count them.

For any reader looking to transform their yard into a natural landscape with native shrubs and trees, it's the only book you'll need as you start planning your new yard.

For instance, I have three common lilacs in our backyard that have been there since we moved in. But in the dozen or so years we've been in this house, only one of the lilacs has ever bloomed, and that doesn't even occur annually. While I expanded my native flower garden this year, my goal is to replace those lilacs next year, as well as some other bushes and trees in my back yard.

But what to replace the lilacs with? "*Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees*" helps to make your decision a little easier and definitely more informed. The book includes suggestions for many native alternatives, such as ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*), American bladdernut (*Staphylea trifolia*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) and chokeberry, to name a few. At this point, I'm leaning toward black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*) because they like sun, and are valuable for both pollinators and birds. According to Adelman and Schwartz, chokeberry hosts 29 species of Lepidoptera such as the red admiral, striped hairstreak and coral hairstreak, and at least 21 overwintering and early arriving migratory birds use the berries for emergency food, as well as nesting habitat. That's what I really enjoy about the book — it allows you to not only pick shrubs and trees based on their looks, but also on their value to birds and pollinators.

I rarely brag about anything, but I liked this book so much I immediately ordered their companion book on flowers and plants. I only wish I had purchased it before I expanded my native flower garden in the back yard. However, my next project is the front yard, so it will come in handy next summer when I start on that.

Published by Ohio University Press in 2017, "*Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees*" retails for \$31.96.

**BARBARA A. SCHMITZ** is editor of the *WILD ONES JOURNAL*. *continued*

## Famous facts and quotes from *"Urban Forests, a Natural History of Trees and People in the American Cityscape"*

President George Washington created his all-American landscape at Mount Vernon by selecting the most perfect native trees from the woodlands he owned, which were transplanted by slaves to his home grounds. Fittingly, the father of our nation was the original advocate of native landscaping.

Charles Sprague Sargent, renowned dendrologist and author of the 14-volume *"The Silva of North America"* (1891-1902), urged *"American Trees for America"* and criticized American gardeners for their "ignorance with regard to the true beauty and value of native trees."

In John Davey's book, *"The Tree Doctor,"* he encouraged his readers to "examine a leaf. How many will see its beauty, saying nothing of its utility? Did you ever stop to think that all the millions of tons of timber ever grown were made in the leaf?" Davey was also horrified by the "ghastly wounds" suffered by trees, and wrote that "their various suffering ... pierce[d] his inmost soul."

In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed in an Arbor Day letter to U.S. schoolchildren "the importance of trees to us as a nation and of what they yield in adornment, comfort and useful products."

What a contrast to Ronald Reagan, who as governor of California, said, "If you've seen one redwood, you've seen them all." (Jonnes, replaces "redwood" with "tree," which is a paraphrase according to most sources.) Reagan made the statement to counter advocates for the preservation of large redwood forests.

Reagan's successor, George H.W. Bush, reversed Reagan's policies and introduced his "American the Beautiful" initiative promoting the planting of a billion trees a year throughout the country from "the rural countryside to the center of our cities." In several years, every state established an urban forestry program.

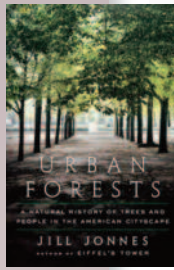
Richard M. Daley promised to plant half a million trees when he became mayor of Chicago in 1989 and passionately endorsed the greening of the city. "What's really important?" he asked.

"It's the personal things. A tree, a child, flowers. We need to soften the cities. Neighborhoods need parks that are habitat. ... Taking care of nature is part of life. If you don't take care of your tree and don't take care of your child, they won't thrive."

## "Urban Forests, a Natural History of Trees and People in the American Cityscape"

—BY JILL JONNES—

By Mariette Nowak



*"Urban Forests..."* traces the history of trees and urban forests throughout American history, from the days of our first president. Of all the historical events, the most tragic were the losses of American chestnuts in the early 1900s, the American elm from 1928 through the 1980s, and ash trees since 2002.

The elm was, perhaps, the most mourned, for it represented up to 75 percent of the urban street trees at the time. I was a Milwaukee city kid who marveled at the graceful intricacy of their branching when I first got eyeglasses as I walked under their arching canopy. The elm was beloved even earlier by the American Indians who called it the "Lady of the Forest." In my city alone, a heartbreaking 128,000 elms were lost between 1956 and 1988.

On a more positive note, the author records the establishment of Arbor Day and its continuing work in championing tree planting throughout the country, the Tree City USA program, and the Million Tree campaigns in several U.S. cities, as well as the many advocates for trees throughout the last two centuries and into the 21st century. She also describes the many efforts to produce disease-resistant chestnuts and elms.

Unfortunately, many of the tree species popularized through the years were not the native local species that are so invaluable for our native wildlife. The ginkgo, native to China, is a hardy and attractive tree, but supports only five species of lepidoptera (butterflies and moths), in contrast to the 532 species hosted by our American oak trees. In addition, some of the nonnative tree species were overplanted, even invasive, and are now banned or discouraged, including the once-loved Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), which has become an invasive weed. Another is Bradford Callery Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*), which has been planted in "epidemic proportions" according to Michael Dirr, author of *"Manual of Woody Landscape Plants,"* and is now invasive in many areas of the eastern U.S.

As the environmental movement gained traction in the late 70s and early 80s, urban tree advocates began to gather hard data on the value of trees in order to encourage cities to invest in urban forestry. Painstaking work, including

inventorying street trees and counting tree leaves, led to incontrovertible proof of the economic and environmental value of trees in combating air pollution, preventing run-off and flooding, sequestering carbon, increasing property values, and cooling cities and thereby saving energy and reducing the need for new power plants. A New York study found the value of its trees at \$90 each. A new tool was developed that could be used by any city to evaluate the environmental and economic contributions of urban trees - *iTree*, a website that offers freely available programs for public use.

Further research revealed the value of trees to the wellbeing of people. Hospital patients with trees outside their windows recover faster. Greater tree canopy reduces stress in pregnant women and produces healthier babies. The loss of ash trees increased respiratory disease and cardiovascular-related deaths in poor and wealthy counties alike. People in Chicago housing projects landscaped with trees and vegetation showed less aggression and more concentration and discipline than those in barren projects. Years of research in Illinois found that those with less access to nature exhibited more stress, higher blood pressure, and significant other physical problems.

The good news is that the incredible services provided by trees are now known and documented. "The time has come," says Jonnes, "for politicians and city managers to get serious about creating the lushest tree canopies we can nurture."

Gary Lovett and a team of scientists offer a solution for avoiding the foreign pests that have now decimated three entire tree species in our country. They propose the *Tree-Smart Trade* policy with two major tenets: End all use of wood packing and pallets, which IKEA is already doing, and restrict or ban further import of woody plants into the U.S. Let us hope they are successful in implementing these needed policies.

*"Urban Forests..."* was published by Penguin Random House. 🌳

**MARIETTE NOWAK** is author of the book, *"Birdscaping in the Midwest,"* and is the past director of the Wehr Nature Center in Milwaukee County, where she served for 18 years. In addition, she is founder and president of the Kettle Moraine Chapter of the Wild Ones, as well as a board member of the Lakeland Audubon Society and past board member of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology. She also serves on the Park Committee in Walworth County.



## CHAPTER NOTES

On Sept. 27, members of the **Arrowhead Chapter** (Minnesota) learned how to collect and store seeds and propagate native plants using an indoor, homemade light system. They also learned different approaches to site preparation and planting native plugs. Their event included a seed and shrub exchange.

The **Blue Ridge Chapter** (Virginia) hosted a seminar on Sept. 12 on how to prepare your garden for winter.

Members of the **Columbus Chapter** (Ohio) will be replacing invasive nonnative euonymus growing in a small garden bed at the OSU Chadwick Arboretum & Learning Gardens with native plants. They will also add a Wild Ones sign, and have agreed to maintain the garden for at least three years. What a great outreach opportunity with high visibility!

Volunteers of the **Driftless Area Chapter** (Wisconsin) planted native plants with the Mayors for Monarchs program on Sept. 25 at the La Crosse City Hall.

The owner of Stone Silo Prairie Gardens presented a program on Sept. 28 at the **Fox Valley Area Chapter** (Wisconsin) meeting. He used his design experience and plant knowledge to demonstrate how to create pollinator habitats by using drifts of native plants.

On Sept. 30, members of the **Greater Cincinnati Chapter** (Ohio) toured Imago, a grassroots, environmental education organization located in the Price Hill neighborhood of Cincinnati. For more than 30 years, Imago has been modeling and educating people about living in concert with the natural world.

**Green Bay Chapter** (Wisconsin) members learned about the design, plant selection and the planting of a new perennial garden at the Green Bay Botanical Garden on Sept. 6. The new garden has more than 11,000 perennials and 1,000 trees and shrubs. Members also took a guided walk through the new garden and reviewed the ecological benefits of using plants that are native to Wisconsin.

Members of the **Menomonee River Area Chapter** (Wisconsin) recently

learned about the medicinal uses of native plants, participated in a member yard tour, and volunteered at the Grades K-5 Prairie Maintenance Day at the Freiss Lake School Prairie.

The owners of Cranberry Meadow Farm discussed sustainable agricultural practices they use to protect the environment, including the water and soil, at an Oct. 14 meeting of the **Mountain Laurel Chapter** (Connecticut).

**Northern Kane County Chapter** (Illinois) members received a behind-the-scenes tour at the Midwest Natural Gardens' nursery, including history, production practices and site development, on Sept. 23.

**Northfield Prairie Partners Chapter** (Minnesota) members enjoyed a program on native prairie sparrows on Oct. 12, and on several occasions, some members reported seeing the endangered rusty patched bumblebee enjoying the floral buffet in their front yards.

**Oak Openings Chapter** (Ohio) members cleaned weeds and removed some natives that were taking over a roundabout on Sept. 9, and held programs on varied topics, such as creating a natural native ecological wildlife habitat, using prescription fire to improve the health and quality of habitat, and choosing the best native shrubs.

Members of the **Rock River Valley Chapter** (Illinois) learned about the ecology, history and restoration of oak savannas at their Sept. 21 meeting, and how to get children interested in nature at their Oct. 19 meeting.

On Sept. 10, **Tennessee Valley Chapter** (Tennessee) members took a raft trip on the Middle Ocoee River to see one of the world's rarest native plants, Ruth's Golden Aster (*Pityopsis ruthii*). Thanks to the efforts of Ann Brown and the District III Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, in collaboration with the Tennessee Valley Chapter and other local partners, the town of Lookout Mountain recently approved a resolution for the town to become a "Bee City USA" affiliate, making an important step toward reversing the threat currently facing pollinators around the world. 🍄



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Story and photos by Barbara A. Schmitz

When Carol and Bob Niendorf purchased their home in 1987, there was minimal landscaping. Basically just two pines and three birch trees surrounded their home that was carved out of a 160-acre farm dating back to 1850.

But today, their 4-acre property just west of Oshkosh is home to more. Much more.

Carol said the couple started getting interested in natural landscaping in 1985. “We bought 15 acres in Waushara County, and as we’d drive there, I would look down at the wildflowers and Bob would look up at the birds,” she recalled. Shortly after, Carol purchased a wildflower identification book and started writing down the names of plants she liked.

About the same time as they bought their house, they saw an article about Neil Diboll, president of Prairie Nursery. They invited him out to their new home to get ideas on natural landscaping. In the meantime, they also started visiting prairie gardens and doing research on native plants.

Then, in June 1989, they seeded about one-third of an acre into prairie. That first seeding included 75 percent flowers and 25 percent grasses. “We didn’t realize that wasn’t authentic at the time,” Bob said.

But after several years of enjoying their prairie, they decided to expand and convert another 2½ acres into prairie. It wasn’t easy. Some parts of the property had been used as an alfalfa field, and “alfalfa roots went down deep,” Bob said. “It was a job to get the competition out of there.”

Their subsequent prairies included more diversity, Carol said, with about 50-60 species. And with that diversity came more birds and pollinators.

Bob says his favorite plants are the pale purple coneflowers (*Echinacea pallida*), butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) and purple prairie clover (*Dalea purpurea*). Carol said she couldn’t choose favorites since she likes them all.

“One year I was unable to go out and walk around because I had a knee replacement,” Carol recalled. “So Bob went out and took video so I could see what I was missing.”

They did their first controlled burn of their prairie in 1991, in part to clean out the prior year’s dried stalks and set back emerging quack grasses and other nonnative invasives.

But as the years went on, their rural property started looking a bit more urban as houses were built around them. So in 2012 they delivered a letter to their neighbors, informing them about the upcoming controlled burn, as well as the reasons for it. In 2016, after many more houses had been built around them, they wrote a letter again, even though this time, the Omro-Rushford Fire Department did the burn as part of its training.

“Most neighbors don’t see the prairie burn as a problem,” Carol said. “We mow it first, which helps to keep the flames down,” Bob said. “Plus, it gives the fire department some practice in how to control a grass fire.”

Being proactive is key, however, they agreed. Letting people know what is going on and why you are doing something is likely why they received little negative feedback.

While all their neighbors haven’t embraced natural landscaping, they at least seem to like it. “We had several neighbors put in small areas of native plants, so that’s good,” Carol said. “Others will be walking the dogs and tell me that they enjoy watching the prairie over the season.”

Their prairies do take work. “There is always maintenance to do,” Bob said. “And even native plants can be invasive,” Carol said. “We learned that from experience.”

The two native plants that have been the most aggressive in their prairies are white false indigo (*Baptisia lactea*) and stiff goldenrod (*Solidago rigida*). “Both are beautiful plants ... but they can move in and take out your diversity,” she said.

Bob and Carol Niendorf sit on one of the many benches that dot their property. The fire pit has been popular with their grandchildren.



PHOTOS, CLOCKWISE:

*Rudbeckia hirta* provide bright color to the Niendorf property each fall.

A bee on *Dalea purpurea*.

A viceroy butterfly nectars off *Echinacea purpurea*.

More than 50 varieties of native plants provide a colorful background for one of many birdhouses on the Niendorf property.

A gazebo provides the Niendorfs with a shaded place to sit and enjoy nature. The open door to the right leads to their prairie meadow and tallgrass prairie.

A Wild Ones sign reminds visitors that this land is in harmony with nature.

## Member Garden

Carol and Bob Niendorf  
Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** We’d like to feature our members’ native gardens, large or small, in upcoming issues. If you’re interested in sharing your native garden, send three or four high-resolution photos, as well as a brief description, to [barbara.a.benish@gmail.com](mailto:barbara.a.benish@gmail.com).

Please include your contact information so we can get in touch with you.





## About the Niendorfs

- They are charter members of the Fox Valley Area Chapter, joining in 1995 as the chapter first started.
- Carol was chapter president from 2000-2003. She was also the founding chairwoman of the chapter's annual "Toward Harmony with Nature" conference that began in 1997. She continues to work on the conference each year as program chairwoman.
- Bob is the longtime conference treasurer.

And once out of control, it's difficult to get plants back in control. "Last summer we started working on stiff goldenrod," Bob said. "We've reduced the population, but there are always new plants coming from all the years it was out there growing. You just have to be vigilant and keep an eye on things as they go along."

When the plants came up last spring, Bob cut off the seed heads with a weed whacker. "If we stay here another 25 years and keep working on it, we'll get it under control," he said, smiling. "Maybe."

At least that's the goal for the future, he said. However, a second goal is finding someone who will keep their natural landscaping when they retire and move from their property.

For others thinking of adding native plants to their property, Carol advises to do research first. "Talk to Wild Ones members. Go on yard tours and ask questions. Take your time and learn about it."

Bob also encourages people to start small. "People should be adventurous," he said. "Start by plugging some natives into your traditional yard in a back corner or do a planting at your cottage. I think native landscaping will become their middle names like it has become ours. We're dyed-in-the-wool Wild Ones..." 🌻

**BELOW:** A mowed pathway allows visitors to get up close to the plants and pollinators.



## About the Yard

- The 4-acre property is located just west of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and includes about 3 acres of natural landscaping.
- The Niendorf property is home to a prairie garden, first seeded in 1989, and a tallgrass prairie, prairie meadow and native savanna restoration, all created in 1997. They also have vegetable and herb gardens.
- About 50 varieties of birds annually visit their grounds, as well as monarchs, viceroy, swallowtails, bumblebees and a variety of other pollinators.
- Bob also keeps honeybees on their property, and gets up to 200 pounds of honey annually.
- Just some of the native plants that can be found there include nodding onion, butterflyweed, rattlesnake master, bergamot, smooth penstemon, black-eyed Susan, yellow coneflower, poppy mallow, spiderwort, prairie smoke, lupine and grasses such as little bluestem, prairie dropseed and side oats grama.





# 45 members from 9 states attend Annual Meeting, Workshop

By Karen Syverson and Elaine Krizenesky

The 2017 Wild Ones Annual Meeting  
and Chapter Workshop

was held Aug. 19 at Seno K/RLT

(Kenosha/Racine Land Trust) Conservancy,  
located near Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.

Thank you to the 45 Wild Ones members  
from nine states and 18 chapters  
who traveled to southeastern Wisconsin  
to attend the event and enjoy the day  
with other chapter leaders.

Judy Kesser of the Milwaukee/  
Southwest Wehr Chapter demonstrates  
how to tag a monarch.

## Chapter roundtables spur discussion

During the morning roundtable discussion, Wild Ones members heard from four chapter leaders who each talked about one of their chapter's programs that has been a successful community outreach effort. The discussion that followed sparked much interaction with those present asking questions and sharing their own chapter's successful ventures.

Constance McCarthy, president of the **Rock River Valley Chapter**, described her chapter's three-day event that featured a talk by Heather Holm and a tour of native gardens, which was hosted as a public event. The chapter has a multi-stop tour and conducts membership drives in conjunction with the tour. Due to its large size, the event is held only every two or three years, McCarthy said. Sites are scouted at the time of year the tour will take place to see what the site will actually look like. Local businesses, newspapers, forestry groups and the university extension are all asked to sponsor the event. This major event has boosted the chapter's standing in the community, she said.

Rock River Valley also has a strong program to assist new members. They put a green ribbon on the nametag of new members so veterans can introduce themselves and offer assistance. Their member chairperson also sends new members a packet, including an offer of a mentor if the member wishes personalized advice.

Lisa Oddis, president of **Menomonee River Area Chapter**, discussed her chapter's native plant sale, held in conjunction with Johnson's Nursery. Oddis said Johnson's does most of the legwork to label plants, making things less labor-intensive for chapter members. In the past, they had a one-day event. But this year, the nursery had a month-long sale and offered a 40 percent discount to members, giving people an incentive to join.

The chapter is also implementing a YouTube presence to target younger potential members.

**West Cook Chapter** has worked to establish the West Cook Wild Ones Wildlife Corridor Project. Pam Todd, chapter president, spoke of their efforts and accomplishments to partner with other community organizations and raise funds for the project. The chapter is only 3½ years old, but has about 120 members.

Todd said one thing they try to do is apply for local grants to pay for speakers at events, which allows the events to be free to the public. For example, they received a grant from a local family foundation, which allowed them to put on a film festival. They also try to sign up members at those events.

The chapter also partners with various organizations, such as a conservatory, which promotes natives in area plantings and helps to spread the word about Wild Ones. However, be aware that if your chapter wants to apply for grants, it first needs to check with National to ensure it meets nonprofit guidelines.

Judy Kesser, officer and longtime member of the **Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr Chapter**, began raising and tagging Monarch butterflies through Monarch Watch. Her interest led her to butterfly sanctuaries in the mountains of Mexico, and she shares her deep interest and knowledge with people in and around Milwaukee.

Kesser demonstrated that individual members could make a difference by concentrating their outreach on areas of interest to them. As a retired teacher, she created a PowerPoint presentation to share with students at area schools. As word spread, she was invited to garden groups, church groups, assisted living facilities and other adult groups.



Linda Mihel, Sandy Miller and Pam Wolfe, all from the Lake-to-Prairie Chapter, Illinois, enjoy some laughter during the event.



Members walked the prairie at Seno K/RLT and learned about the plants and insects that reside there. PHOTO: Elaine Krizenesky



## Three engaging speakers

Participants heard from speakers in three sessions:

- Kelsay Shaw, sales consultant and botanist for Possibility Place Nursery in Monee, Illinois, spoke about his techniques of growing native plants and their uses in the landscape. His main message was clear: the choices you make, even before you put plants in the ground, matter. This includes thinking about your area and what grows there, local diseases and what season you are planting.
- Rick Wadleigh and John Sharpe, entomologists from southeastern Wisconsin, led an enjoyable walk through Seno's prairie and discussed various insects found there. A monarch caterpillar was even spotted!
- Susan Carpenter, senior outreach specialist at the UW Arboretum in Madison, Wisconsin, talked about citizen science and the Arboretum's highly successful bumblebee conservation project. Carpenter stressed the importance of including monitoring into your gardening practices. Options to monitor are endless: when specific flowers bloom, when birds or butterflies arrive or when types of bees are spotted.

## Wild Ones annual meeting

Each year, Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd. holds an annual meeting. Wild Ones President Janice Hand called the 2017 meeting to order at 1 p.m. and presented the 2017 annual report, which detailed the efforts and accomplishments of the year.

Tim McKeag, president of Wild Ones Fox Valley Chapter, was also recognized for his outstanding support and the chapter's contribution to the WILD Center.

## Generous donations add to fun

Chapters and individuals donated new and gently used items for a drawing at the end of the afternoon. Because of the number of items, many attendees went home with very nice prizes. All added to the fun and ensured that the conference expenses were more than covered. A huge thank you to the many individuals and chapters who donated items.

## Seno Conservancy

Thank you to Nan Calvert, director, and to the Seno K/RLT Conservancy, for offering the use of this site for the event.

## Looking to the future

In the past few years, the Wild Ones Annual Meeting has been held at the WILD Center in Neenah, Wisconsin. Moving the event to a different location this year afforded the opportunity to meet people who might not otherwise travel to the Fox Cities.

The formal Annual Meeting was once held at various chapter locations in late summer or fall, often in conjunction with another chapter event, although not with a leadership workshop. It was a way for the national directors to hold a face-to-face meeting and to also get to know chapter leaders from various parts of the country. If your chapter has an interest in hosting a future meeting, please contact one of the national board members listed on Page 2. 🌸

**KAREN SYVERSON** is secretary of the Wild Ones Board of Directors, and **ELAINE KRIZENESKY** is manager of marketing and membership.



Wild Ones members spotted this monarch caterpillar during the prairie walk with John Sharpe.

PHOTO: Elaine Krizenesky

## Thank you to our sponsors

A special thank you to the following sponsors for their contributions to the Annual Meeting and Chapter Workshop event



President Janice Hand presents a Certificate of Appreciation to Tim McKeag and members of the Fox Valley Chapter. PHOTO: Elaine Krizenesky



Marilyn Jones, of the Twin Cities chapter, shows off the butterfly pillow from the basket drawing. PHOTO: Elaine Krizenesky



Pat Brust, left, and Bethany Skinner, both of the Milwaukee-Southwest/Wehr Chapter, helped organize prizes for the drawing. PHOTO: Karen Syverson



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| Copps, Neenah                   | US Venture, Appleton         |
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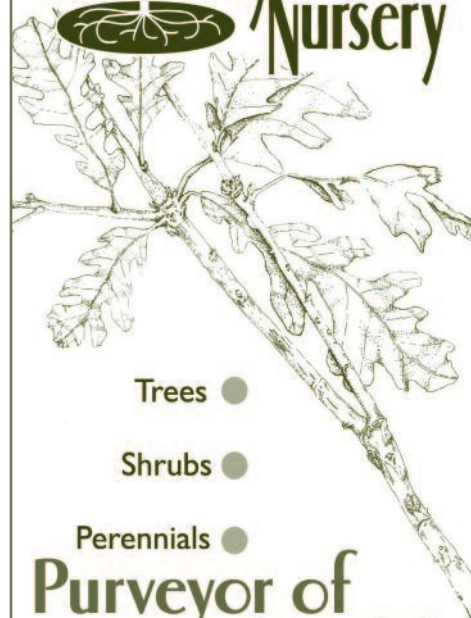
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By Mariette Nowak

Since the Wild Ones Nativar Committee issued its findings in 2013, there has been more research comparing straight native species with nativars. Most of the research has focused on insect and pollinator preferences. Here, I will describe research done at several universities in England, where the term “cultivars” is used rather than “nativars.” In a future article, I’ll highlight some of the nativar research in the U.S.

## Cambridge University research

Cambridge University in England conducted several of the studies. In 1995-96, researchers compared six “near-original” flower types with cultivars of the plants at the University’s Botanic Gardens. The “near-original” description is apparently a reference to the lack of a definitive straight native species of the flower types in this study.

The cultivars were modified horticulturally in the shape, size and number of parts or color of the flowers. The six species included were hollyhock (*Alcea rosea* L.), larkspur (*Consolida* sp.), marigold (*Tagetes patula* L.), nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus* L.), pansy (*Viola*), and snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus* L.). Sadly, all the species in the study are better known in the U.S. than our own native flora.

The Cambridge researchers compared the “near-original” single-flowered hollyhock, larkspur, and marigold with their double-flowered cultivars. (Double-flowered cultivars have many extra petals compared to the normal flower, often accompanied by the loss of nectar and/or pollen-producing parts.) Comparisons of nasturtium included both the “near-original” single flower vs. double flower cultivars and the “near-original” spurred type vs. spurless cultivars. Small (ancestral) pansies were compared with larger cultivars (*Viola x wittrockiana* Gams). “Near-original” snapdragons were compared with more symmetrical cultivars. In 1999, they published the results in *Annals of Botany* in a paper titled, “Garden Flowers: Insect Visits and the Floral Reward of Horticulturally modified Variants.”

The researchers found that, in most cases, wild bees preferred flowers with single petals or more natural flower shapes. Overall, cultivars of the plants reduced the value of flower rewards (the nectar and pollen), often due to inaccessibility,

especially in the double-flowered cultivars. The researchers also found that some cultivars favored short-tongued bees over long-tongued bees. This was a concern since long-tongued bees have declined in Britain and are locally extinct in some areas. Effects on seed production was not investigated, but was thought likely to be reduced, with additional loss in wildlife value.

In a 2001 study at Cambridge Botanic Gardens, researchers studied nine species of garden flowers. They compared native species with nonnative species and single-petal flowers with double-flowered cultivars. The results were similar to the former study. The double-flowered cultivars had few insect visitors and often offered little or no nectar. Nonnative

## English insects prefer English natives over nativars

*EDITOR’S NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles by Mariette Nowak on recent research on cultivars of native plants, often called nativars. Nowak was the co-coordinator, along with Dan Segal, of the Wild Ones Committee on Nativars in 2013.*

*The Committee concluded the following: “Due to the loss of genetic diversity and other potential problems ... along with the fact that nativars are not the same as native species in the wild, Wild Ones does not encourage their use. As stated in our mission statement, our goal is ‘to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities.’”*

*Read their complete [nativars statement](#).*

species also had few insect visitors. The researchers concluded with this advice: “Gardeners seeking to enhance pollinator populations are encouraged to grow selected native species and single variants where possible.” Read their article [here](#).

## University of Sussex research

This 2015 study, “Survey of insect visitation of ornamental flowers in Southover Grange Garden, Lewes, UK,” investigated the attractiveness of 79 varieties of ornamental flowers including open-flowered compared with highly modified closed-flowered dahlias. Closed-flowers are flowers whose shape blocks insects from reaching the pollen, while open-flowers can be accessed by insects. The original native dahlias were open-flowered forms. Not surprisingly, the researchers found

that open-flowered dahlias were 20 times more attractive to insects than the close-flowered, horticulturally modified forms. Furthermore, the researchers found that 77 percent of the varieties of popular cultivated ornamentals were either poorly or completely unattractive to insects.

## The upshot

This research in England validates the concerns of the Wild Ones Committee regarding nativars, the human-created cultivars of native plants. Our native insects prefer – and indeed often require – native plant species with which they evolved in their local regions and countries. Cultivars are often unattractive to native insects and usually do not offer the nutrition they require. We all depend on native bees and other insects for our own nutrition. They pollinate and help produce 35 percent of our food crops, as well as 75 percent of our flowering plants, according to the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service. Unfortunately, many bees and other pollinators are suffering severe declines and we need to help them survive so they can continue to produce our food and flowers, providing us with sustenance for our bodies and spirits. Every gardener can help by planting straight natives.

We also need to keep in mind the main irrefutable concern of the Nativar Committee – the loss of the original plant genes when we manipulate plants that have evolved and survived over

**Double** thousands, perhaps millions, of years. This genetic material is irreplaceable and can be lost forever if we replace them throughout our landscapes with nativars. Our native plant species, like our bees and birds, face many threats today including loss of habitat, invasive species and climate change, and their preservation depends on us. As Aldo Leopold wrote in his classic book, “*A Sand County Almanac*,” “A species must be saved in *many places* if it is to be saved at all.” 🌸

**MARIETTE NOWAK** is author of the book, “*Birdscaping in the Midwest*,” and is the past director of the Wehr Nature Center in Milwaukee County, where she served for 18 years. In addition, she is founder and president of the Kettle Moraine Chapter of the Wild Ones, as well as a board member of the Lakeland Audubon Society and past board member of the Wisconsin Society of Ornithology. She also serves on the Park Committee in Waukegan County.

Just by looking at photos of a single-petal hollyhock and one with double petals, it's easy to see why wild bees in England prefer the native flower with the single petal since it offers more nectar.

By Karen Graham and Julia Vanatta

Each spring, Wild Ones chapters in Minnesota celebrate a return to green at the Design With Nature Conference.



Our event draws together Wild Ones members and like-minded groups from Minnesota, Wisconsin and other nearby states to share their passion for learning and acting with nature.

The roots of our event began on March 20, 2001, the first day of spring. A seedling chapter, which was new to the Twin Cities, organized a fair promoted as “Native Landscaping with the Wild Ones” in Edina, Minnesota. About 40 people, including local native plant nurseries and landscape exhibitors, attended the three-hour event. Members of the young chapter planted a seed that has grown to become an all-day conference attracting nearly 300 attendees.

Organizers from the Twin Cities chapter benefited greatly by the support, guidance and how-to advice from the Fox Valley Area and Milwaukee-North chapters, as well as the national office. Their generosity in answering questions and sharing tips

helped us move quickly through the learning curve. It also prompted the idea of joining with other Minnesota chapters to co-host the event, lightening the workload and having more fun in the process.

Our first full-day conference in 2010 focused on creating healthy communities above and below ground, and featured Douglas Tallamy, Ed Plaster, Welby Smith and Evelyn Hadden. Tallamy, author of “*Bringing Nature Home*,” caught the eye of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, which did an interview prior to the event. The Q & A article generated so much interest that people had to be turned away. Nothing like a sold-out event to boost the following year’s attendance!

Over the years, speakers such as Heather Holm, Rick Darke, Lisa Lee Benjamin, Darrel Morrison, Larry Weaner, Mariette Nowak and Travis Beck have inspired us. In February 2017, Tallamy returned to an enthusiastic crowd. In 2018, we will welcome Jared Rosenbaum, Catherine Zimmerman and Rachel Mackow to speak on planting under trees, re-messaging for community action and growing medicinal native plants.

Conference planning and logistics are in progress for both 2018 and 2019. Each year changes are made to improve how we work together and distribute the load among participating chapters. This year we’re breaking the conference into components, asking chapters to lead one key area.

How to  
**GROW**  
your  
chapter  
conference



**1. Wild Ones member Paul Erdmann talks with an attendee about the Bush Lake Chapter of Izaak Walton League, a conference sponsor and partner.** PHOTO: Rita Ulrich

**2. Conference participants surround the Prairie Moon Nursery exhibit at the Design with Nature conference. Prairie Moon is a business member and 2017 was the first year they were an exhibitor.** PHOTO: Roger Miller

**3. Volunteers George Skinner, Anne Hanley and Bill Blood are ready for guests to arrive.** PHOTO: Roger Miller

**4. Design with Nature Conference attendees listen attentively as Karen welcomes everyone to the 2017 conference.** PHOTO: Rita Ulrich



The organizing committee is currently made up of four chapters from the greater metropolitan community. These are Twin Cities, St. Croix Oak Savanna, Prairie Edge and Big River Big Woods. Working together on a regional event increases Wild Ones' visibility and invites partnerships between chapters. All Minnesota chapters, including St. Cloud (oldest in Minnesota), Arrowhead (Duluth) and Northfield Prairie Partners are invited to join in planning, attending and helping to promote within their communities.

In 2016, we tried something new for conference registration. When the early-bird discount ended, we added the option of joining Wild Ones with admission at the early-bird rate. Several people took us up, including some who used the offer to renew. About 15 new members joined in 2017 and another 14 renewed or re-joined. Using Evenbrite not only allows us to plan, promote and sell tickets to people in advance, but it also allows us to gather data, including chapter preference.

Although the conference constantly evolves, a few underlying principles have remained the same.

- The conference is purely for education, not fundraising. We work diligently to keep expenses down and the ticket price low. Book sales at the conference help defray costs and build operating capital. A very fun silent auction initially helped accrue funds. Now the auction supports mini-grants for Minnesota chapters wanting to develop educational materials or projects focused on native plants.
- Our speakers share their insights, stirring us to action. We seek to offer the spark to stretch our imaginations, to rethink old patterns of thought.
- Invited exhibitors and sponsors must complement the mission of Wild Ones. Whether a native plant business or a like-minded organization, our exhibitors are an integral part of this conference, offering resources and tools for all in attendance.
- A diverse mix of attendees, whether newcomers or seasoned professionals, keep the conversation grounded in what's happening in the native plant movement and where it's going. Attendees also provide insights that lead us toward future conference themes and speakers.

Organizations certify Continuing Education Unit or CEU credits for Master Gardeners, Master Water Stewards and Master Naturalists. We also reach out to local colleges with landscape majors, offering students a reduced rate.

And last, we cannot overstate the importance and contributions of our dedicated volunteers who prepare for an uplifting day of education and outreach. We are fortunate to have many willing volunteers and liked-minded partners who bring a fresh perspective and energy.

Each conference is amazing for the warmth and enthusiasm generated by our attendees. It is a wonderful time to gather together and celebrate the renewal of spring. 🌸

**KAREN GRAHAM** has been part of the early fair/expo since 2002 and has worked on nearly every conference since.

**JULIA VANATTA** has been involved in the conference since 2008. Both are members of the Wild Ones Twin Cities Chapter.



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Mating monarchs on *Asclepias syriaca*. PHOTO: Pat Sutton

By Patricia Sutton

As an educator, passionate naturalist, wildlife gardener and watcher of birds, butterflies and dragonflies, I understand just how important it is to landscape with native plants. I have taught wildlife gardening workshops for more than 30 years to help spread the word. I have also led tours of private wildlife gardens for 25-plus years to showcase landscapes teeming with pollinators, insects, frogs and toads, birds, stunning native wildflowers, trees and shrubs.

Wildlife gardening has brought me great joy, hence my motivation to spread the word and bring that joy to others.

I don't have to travel to far-reaching corners of the earth. I can simply pop out the door into my garden with binoculars and camera and be entertained for hours, day after day as seasons unfold. I am constantly in awe of the many creatures that have found my yard and benefitted from the native plants and my wildlife friendly practices.

I love inspiring new wildlife gardeners, helping them build a

knowledge base to begin shaping their own yards into wildlife havens. But, one serious challenge new gardeners face is coping with "enthusiastic" natives. These plants can turn new gardeners off to using natives and that is the last thing we want to do. Instead we need to help new gardeners avoid problematic natives or arm them with enough information to cope with native thugs.

While teaching workshops or giving programs, people often voice concerns about common milkweed, cup plant, obedient plant, mistflower, trumpet creeper, late-flowering thoroughwort, Virginia creeper, wild grape and other natives. New-to-natives gardeners often call these plants invasive.

"No!" I shriek. "Please do not use the term invasive when talking about a native plant. Please, please, please instead use the word invasive to describe only the true nonnative plants that are smothering the landscape and overwhelming natives, such as kudzu,



A White-M hairstreak nectars on *Eupatorium serotinum*. PHOTO: Pat Sutton

# 'Enthusiastic' native plants:

Pat Sutton pulls up roots of *Aristolochia tomentosa* after a rain. PHOTO: Clay Sutton



English ivy or periwinkle. If a *native* plant is a thug, please describe it as aggressive or enthusiastic instead!"

New-to-natives gardeners are already struggling to understand native plants, so let's not add to that confusion by describing a native plant as invasive.

I would like to address some enthusiastic natives that are wonderful wildlife plants, but present challenges to new and even experienced gardeners. Maybe we shouldn't recommend these thugs or bullies to new gardeners or should only recommend them with clear warnings as some native plant nurseries do in their educational materials.

## Enthusiastic native plants I have chosen not to plant

I have limited garden space and have been selective in what I plant and what I remove. I've been offered many native plants over the years from fellow wildlife gardeners. I've found some to be marginally attractive to wildlife so my decision not to plant was an easy one. I've chosen not to plant others because I know of other native options that I prefer because they are more attractive to wildlife or pollinators and not problematic.

- Obedient plant (*Physostegia virginiana*) is anything but obedient. It soon crowds out diverse plantings.
- Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) in our area attracts comparatively few pollinators. On top of that, it spreads with abandon and crowds out diverse plantings.
- Cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) marches through garden beds and the roots are nearly impossible to dig out.





A cloudless sulphur caterpillar on *Chamaecrista fasciculata*. PHOTO: Pat Sutton

### Highly beneficial ‘enthusiastic’ natives that I have planted, but someday I may regret

- Trumpet vine (*Campsis radicans*) — This vine is covered with trumpet-like orange blooms July through September that draws in nectaring ruby-throated hummingbirds. The vine covers an arbor nicely, providing shade and a great place to sit and be entertained by hummingbirds. But trumpet creeper seeds heavily. One simple solution is to cut off and remove the seeds before they can spread. However, the parent plant sends underground roots and runners that divide and divide again, and before you know it dozens of new plants sprout from these roots in the surrounding lawn and garden beds. It is a bear to dig up these wandering roots.
- Dutchman’s pipe (*Aristolochia tomentosa*) — This vine is one of the pipevine swallowtail’s caterpillar plants. I planted two vines. One is growing up a 33-year-old tulip tree and draws in egg-laying pipevine swallowtails all summer and early fall. I planted the second vine to grow up a Georgia hackberry. Ten years later, I began noticing 100-plus Dutchman’s pipe shoots coming up in the surrounding lawn and far away in my perennial garden. When I tried to dig them up I found substantial roots from the parent vine far away. I freaked out and cut that vine down. Its underground roots are still thriving and continue to plague me with dozens of shoots and for the last two years it has been growing up my neighbor’s trees. I don’t feel good about introducing it to the neighborhood.

### Enthusiastic natives that are so beneficial that I’ve planted them and budget time and muscle to keep them under control

- Blue mistflower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*) — This stunning blue wildflower is a pollinator magnet from late August through October. But after the blooms fade, its seeds blow all over the garden. A simple solution is to cut the seed heads off before they disperse and scatter them where you don’t mind them taking over. If your soil is moist, mistflower can create mats of thick white roots excluding other natives you’ve chosen for that site. It also spreads via runners. Every spring I dig up mistflower roots from many parts of my garden and transplant them to my “mistflower bed.” By fall when they’re blooming in spots where I missed digging up their roots, I’m always happy to see them and the pollinators they’re benefitting.
- Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) — This early summer bloomer (mid-June through July) swarms with nectaring butterflies and bees. The blooms are beautiful and intoxicatingly fragrant. And common milkweed is an important caterpillar plant for monarchs. I planted common milkweed in the back of my pollinator garden in what I thought was a sizable bed. It filled that bed, has come up in other beds across the garden path and walked all over my garden via wind-blown seeds and robust underground roots. I leave a number of the wayward plants because common milkweed is so important to monarchs. But every spring I dig up many young wayward shoots and their lengthy roots and pot them up for friends (also sharing clear warnings that this plant is a native thug).

Word of warning, purple milkweed (*Asclepias purpurascens*), which some native plant nurseries are beginning to propagate and sell, is also an enthusiastic native!

For those who want to provide milkweed for monarchs, there are more well-behaved milkweeds: (1) butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) for dry sunny spots, (2) swamp milkweed (*Asclepias*



A monarch nectars on *Conoclinium coelestinum* PHOTO: Pat Sutton

# Don’t call them invasive

A juniper hairstreak on *Pycnanthemum muticum*.

PHOTO: Pat Sutton

BELOW: *Campsis radicans* and its orange blooms July through September draw in nectaring hummingbirds.

PHOTO: Mike Matthews





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*incarta*) for moist sunny spots, (3) poke milkweed (*Asclepias exaltata*) for woodland sites, and many others recommended in Monarch Joint Venture's "Plant Milkweed for Monarchs" flyer featuring the best milkweeds to plant region-by-region.

■ Late-flowering Thoroughwort (*Eupatorium serotinum*) — Eupatoriums are hairstreak magnets and I do love hairstreaks. When this plant blooms in September, I keep a close eye on it and am rewarded almost daily with lovely looks and photo opportunities. Many different and interesting pollinators are also attracted. The plant looks like a big, dainty, white bouquet in the garden. But, beware, it seeds with a vengeance! Being a wildlife gardener, I am not a tidy gardener. I do not deadhead for fear of harming camouflaged caterpillars and chrysalises. But I do cut the seed heads off my late-flowering thoroughwort before the wind can carry them throughout my garden and reward me with thousands of babies the following spring. If you miss some of the seeds and plants pop up in spring, they are easy to pull out.

■ Partridge Pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*) — This native annual buzzes loudly with pollinators when it blooms in August and September. It is dainty and adds a golden yellow glow to the garden. Partridge pea is the caterpillar plant for cloudless sulphur butterflies. There are a few spots in my garden where I let this heavy seeder fill in garden beds where early-summer bloomers have run their course. But from late spring through summer I pull up thousands of Partridge Pea seedlings where I don't want them to grow, like my garden path. If I didn't, we'd be wading through chest high plants. I also pull them up from garden beds where fall bloomers have yet to star. Partridge Pea seedlings are easy to spot and pull up.

■ Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) — This native wildflower comes up with abandon in early successional areas and garden beds. Each pokeweed plant produces as many as a thousand dark juicy berries, attracting 50 different birds. As birds feed on the fruits and the seeds pass through their system, they willy-nilly plant pokeweed where they perch. There are a few spots in my yard where I let it flourish, tough spots where not much else grows: under our white pines and our Elderberry bush.

Elderberry is a spring bloomer, but by fall it is not a show stopper. Pokeweed is stunning in fall with its hot pink stems and abundant, juicy berries. But if I fail to spot a young pokeweed seedling and it has a chance to flourish for a season or two, the roots go to China and it can be a beast to dig up.

■ Clustered Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum muticum*) — There are a number of native mountain mints. This nectar plant is a must in any wildlife garden. It blooms July through September. My prowls through the garden include repeated strolls by my beds of mountain mint, alive with pollinators. All members of the mint family are known spreaders, so to keep my garden tasks manageable, I simply put edging around my two beds of mountain mint. Yes, runners escape through spots where the edging overlaps and sometimes creep under it or over it, but stray runners and roots are easy to pull up, pot up and share with a friend.

Some other enthusiastic natives that are happily creating wonderful layers in shady parts of our yard include common blue wood aster (*Symphotrichum cordifolium*), lyreleaf sage (*Sakvia lyrata*) and golden ragwort (*Packera aurea*). I love these heavy seeders and spreaders that are successfully filling in areas where true invasive problem plants might take hold. Embrace enthusiastic natives!

I live and garden in southern New Jersey. If you live elsewhere, you probably have additional tales to tell of enthusiastic natives that you cherish but may work to contain, as well as others that through experience you've chosen not to plant. 🌱

**PAT SUTTON** has studied the natural world for over 40 years, first as the naturalist at the Cape May Point State Park in the 1970s and 1980s, and then for 21 years as the naturalist and program director at the Cape May Bird Observatory (1986 to 2007). She and her husband, Clay Sutton, wrote "Birds and Birding at Cape May" (Stackpole Books, 2006), the in-depth result of their efforts documenting and protecting the migration and the Cape May area they love. Other books by the Suttons include "How to Spot Butterflies" (1999), "How to Spot Hawks & Eagles" (1996), and "How to Spot an Owl" (1994). Today, Pat is a freelance writer, photographer, naturalist, educator, lecturer, tour leader and wildlife garden consultant. She is also an honorary director of the Wild Ones. For more information, go to [www.patsuttonwildlifegarden.com](http://www.patsuttonwildlifegarden.com).





A monarch nectars off frost aster (*S. pilosum*) in the school garden.

## SEEDS FOR EDUCATION

### New Jersey school creates wetland garden, thanks to SFE grant

**E**gg Harbor City Community School, of Egg Harbor City, New Jersey, created a wetlands garden, thanks to a \$500 Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant.

Project coordinator Jeanette DePiero wrote in their first-year report that three teachers and two students planted a variety of wildflowers in July 2016. The garden is being maintained and monitored by students and staff, as well as the school's after-school program REACH.

She said the staff was pleased with the selection of the plants. Earth First Native Plant Nursery and Gifts and Rarefind Nursery supplied the plants, which included dense blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), spiderwort (*Tradescantia occidentalis*), sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), stiff coreopsis (*Coreopsis palmata*), smooth aster (*Aster laevis*), swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarta*), rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) and many others.



DePiero said the garden has been well received and is often visited by students, staff and a variety of butterflies. Students who visit the garden observe the plants, insects and butterflies, she wrote, and also draw pictures or take photos of the flowers and pollinators in it. 🌸

Students and teachers at Egg Harbor City Community School planted a wetlands garden, thanks to a \$500 Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant.

# Native

# poinsettias

# not as showy

By Donna VanBuecken

**T**he beautiful poinsettias (genus *Euphorbia*) we see decorating building interiors this time of the year are not native to the United States, but rather to Southern Mexico and Central America. However, did you know we have species of native poinsettias here in America as well?

Members of the Spurge (*Euphorbiaceae*) family, native poinsettias — like the nonnative species — have a thick, white sap that can irritate skin and eyes. The flower that is most like the nonnative one so popular during the holidays is the annual Painted Poinsettia (*Euphorbia cyathophora*). Its bracts turn orange-red and it has fiddle-shaped leaves. Sometimes called Fire on the Mountain, it is closely related to Snow on the Mountain (*Euphorbia marginata*), which has showy, variegated light green and white leaves. *Euphorbia marginata* is different from the invasive, nonnative Bishop's Weed (*Aegopodium podagraria*), which is in the carrot family (*Apiaceae*) and also called Snow on the Mountain.

None of the native *Euphorbia* species, however, are as showy as the nonnative *Euphorbia* species.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Euphorbia cyathophora* can be found in 29 states, primarily in the northern half of the country, as well as in California, Arizona, Utah and New Mexico.

Interestingly enough, the poinsettia received its name from the first American ambassador to Mexico, Joel Roberts Poinsett. In 1828, he sent cuttings of the first plants back to the United States where he propagated and shared the plant with friends and botanical gardens. Poinsett is also known as a founding member of the Smithsonian Institution.

Dec. 12 is celebrated as Poinsettia Day, which marks Poinsett's death.

To learn more about the history and traditions of poinsettias, click [here](#). 🌸

**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.accentnatural.com](http://www.accentnatural.com). She is a member of Wild Ones Fox Valley Area.

***Euphorbia marginata* has light-green variegated leaves.** PHOTO: Wikimedia



***Euphorbia cyathophora* has fiddle-shaped leaves.**

PHOTO: Wikimedia



**A white poinsettia completes Donna's Christmas decorations.**

PHOTO: DONNA VANBUECKEN







# MONARCH BUTTERFLIES DISAPPEARING

## FROM WESTERN NORTH AMERICA

**M**onarch butterfly populations from western North America have declined far more dramatically than was previously known and face a greater risk of extinction than eastern monarchs, according to a new study in the journal *Biological Conservation*.

“Western monarchs are faring worse than their eastern counterparts,” said Cheryl Schultz, an associate professor at Washington State University Vancouver and lead author of the study. “In the 1980s, 10 million monarchs spent the winter in coastal California. Today there are barely 300,000.”

Schultz added: “This study doesn’t just show that there are fewer monarchs now than 35 years ago. It also tells us that, if things stay the same, western monarchs probably won’t be around as we know them in another 35 years.”

Migratory monarchs in the west could disappear in the next few decades if steps aren’t taken to recover the population, Schultz said.

Like eastern monarchs, which overwinter in Mexico, western monarchs have a spectacular migration. They overwinter in forested groves along coastal California, then fan out in the spring to lay their eggs on milkweed and drink nectar from flowers in

Arizona, California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Utah. They return to their coastal overwintering sites in the fall.

In the 1990s, residents of coastal California became alarmed that the once common butterfly seemed to be disappearing. The Biological Conservation study indicates that those concerns were justified. The researchers combined data from hundreds of volunteers who have participated in the Xerces Society’s Western Monarch Thanksgiving Count since 1997 with earlier monarch counts conducted by amateur and professional butterfly enthusiasts in the 1980s and early 1990s. They then predicted the monarch population’s risk of extinction over the next several decades.

Emma Pelton, endangered species conservation biologist at the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and co-author of the study, said the research will help conservationists better understand the extinction risk of western monarchs.

“Scientists, policy makers and the public have been focused on the dramatic declines in the well-known eastern population, yet this study reveals that western monarchs are even more at risk of extinction,” Pelton said.

**Monarch populations in western North America face risk of extinction, a new study shows.**

PHOTO: Karen Eckman

“We will need significant conservation action to save monarch butterflies in the West.”

The precise causes of the decline in western monarchs are not yet clear, but the loss and modification of its habitat and pesticide use across the West, where monarchs breed, are likely culprits, the researchers said. Climate change and threats to coastal California overwintering sites likely also play a role, they said.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which funded the study, is currently considering whether to list the monarch butterfly as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

Elizabeth Crone, Tufts University professor and a co-author on the study, said: “The hard part of being a conservation biologist is documenting species declines. The exciting part is figuring out how to help declining species recover. In the 20th century, we brought bald eagles back from the brink of extinction by limiting use of DDT. If we start now, we can make the 21st century the era in which monarchs return to our landscapes.”

Become part of the solution by becoming a [Citizen Scientist](#) or a [Western Monarch Milkweed Mapper](#). Read the complete study [here](#). 🌸

**New study reveals that western monarch decline is more severe than decline in East**



By Loris Damerow and Elaine Krizenesky

The abundant WILD Center prairie was the site of a monarch-tagging event this fall. Open to the public and sponsored annually by the Winnebago Audubon Society, the event was part of a larger effort to track the 2,200-mile migration of monarch butterflies as they move across the planet.

In years past, monarchs tagged in Wisconsin have been found in their winter quarters in the mountains of central Mexico. On Sept. 9, more than a dozen families explored the WILD Center grounds in search of butterflies, and Wild Ones members were able to take part for free.

Volunteers also assisted participants in attaching a numbered tag to the wing of monarchs, recording their data, and releasing them as part of the nationwide Citizen Science research by the University of Kansas called Monarch Watch. However, cold weather the week before the event resulted in only three monarchs being sighted, caught and released, as opposed to the dozens that were flitting about before and after the event.

## Bridge fixed by Venture Crew

We reported last issue that a recent storm damaged a wooden bridge built by Eagle Scout Chad Seidl. Lucky for us, Chad is also a member of the Kimberly, Wisconsin, Venture Crew 9135, a co-ed scouting group for high school and college students. Crew 9135 came out with a chainsaw and other tools and removed the offending tree, replaced the railing and trimmed up some invasive plants in the area.

The bridge is now better than new as it boasts a new plaque designating its status as an Eagle Scout project. We are grateful to the Crew for their hard work in spite of a humid day and a swarm of hungry mosquitoes.



Venture Crew 9135 repaired the bridge built by Eagle Scout Chad Seidl, far right, on the WILD Center property. Also helping in repairs were, from left, Kylie Dorton, Melissa Friese and Ben Willis.

PHOTO: Elaine Krizenesky

## Merchandise

New Wild Ones logo merchandise will be here in time for the holidays. Our new products will include a larger selection of hats, some fun garden items, a full-zip fleece for women, and youth/toddler clothing perfect for letting your children or grandchildren tell the world they are Wild Ones. Watch your email for more details when the Wild Store is open for business.

## Volunteer efforts

Volunteers have been working hard to keep the WILD Center grounds in top shape. New member Paul Wolters worked with longtime volunteer grounds consultant Dave Edwards to remove a load of rotten firewood that housed an old mouse nest on the back porch. While they were at it, they mowed all the minor trails, repositioned our Turtle Crossing sign so it can be seen easier from the roadway, and tied up the beautiful, but enthusiastic, native plants that made entering the building a bit of a challenge.

St. Mary Catholic High School students spent a few hours cutting down buckthorn to keep it from invading the prairie and meditation garden. They also brought up the contents of the WILD Center library so visitors can cozy up and dream about spring as they read about native plants and pollinators during the cold Wisconsin winter.

And lastly, a special thanks to Trevor Rezner of Matthews Tires, 2039 W. College Ave., Appleton, for removing and disposing tires that were dumped on our property. Best of all, he did it without charge. 🌻



Volunteer Anita Carpenter teaches participants about monarchs at a butterfly-tagging event at the WILD Center.



Anita gives final instructions before participants head out to the pollinator garden at the WILD Center to catch, tag and release monarch butterflies.

PHOTOS: Loris Damerow





## Chapter Information

Information is now online

The Meeting Place has been discontinued in the JOURNAL, allowing us to publish even more stories about natural landscaping and native plants. Please visit [www.wildones.org/connect/chapters](http://www.wildones.org/connect/chapters) for chapter contact information.

## Chapter Anniversaries

- 26 years** – Green Bay (Wisconsin)
- 23 years** – Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin)
- 21 years** – Lake-To-Prairie (Illinois)
- 18 years** – Kalamazoo Area (Michigan)
- 17 years** – Mid-Missouri (Missouri)
- 14 years** – St. Croix Oak Savanna (Minnesota)
- 8 years** – Northern Kane County (Illinois)
- 7 years** – Illinois Prairie (Illinois)
- 2 years** – Big River Big Woods (Minnesota)

## Deceased Members

Notifications have been received for:

**George England**, River City –  
Grand Rapids Area

**Corrine Heiberg**, Northfield Prairie Partners

**Kristi Ann Martinka**, Twin Cities

**Wilma McCallister**, North Park Village  
Nature Center Chapter

*Please email Elaine Krizenesky at  
[administration@wildones.org](mailto:administration@wildones.org)  
to report the death of a member.*

## Mark Your Calendar

**Nov. 17**

**National Take a Hike Day**  
Get out and enjoy your garden  
or local nature preserve

**Nov. 28**

**National Day of Giving**  
(#GivingTuesday)

Please consider furthering Wild Ones' mission with a tax-deductible donation

**Jan. 27**

**Fox Valley Area Chapter 22nd Annual  
Toward Harmony with Nature  
Conference**

8 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.  
Oshkosh Convention Center  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

## Business, Affiliate and Lifetime Members

### RENEWING BUSINESS MEMBERS

#### Lacewing Gardening and Consulting Services

6087 N. Denmark St., Milwaukee,  
WI 53225-1673  
[lacewinggcds@att.net](mailto:lacewinggcds@att.net)  
Menomonee River Area  
Diane M. Olson-Schmidt

#### NES Ecological Services

1250 Centennial Centre Blvd.,  
Hobart, WI 54155-9292  
<http://www.neswi.com>  
[jhavel@releecinc.com](mailto:jhavel@releecinc.com)  
Green Bay  
James Havel

#### Ecoscapes Native Nursery LLC

25755 Zachary Ave., Elko New  
Market, MN 55020  
[www.ecoscapes1.com](http://www.ecoscapes1.com)  
[craigstark@ecoscapes1.com](mailto:craigstark@ecoscapes1.com)  
Twin Cities  
Craig Stark

## FOREVER WILD

### LIFETIME MEMBER

**Brittani Furlong**,  
Oak Openings Region

## Thank you for your contributions

### ANNUAL MEETING

**Gail Maddox**, Habitat Gardening  
in Central New York  
**Nancy Paul**, Green Bay

### GENERAL OPERATING FUND – MEMBER SUPPORT

**Anonymous**, Partner-at-Large  
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**Leona M. Hubatch**, West Cook  
**Timothy and Jill Schmidt**,  
Fox Valley Area  
**Ellen-Marie Silverman**,  
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**Joann Sustachek**,  
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**Mark T. Yost**, Louisville (Seedling)

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**Jim Martinka**, Twin Cities  
**Kemp & Spencer Myslajek**,  
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**Trudi Poquette**, Twin Cities  
**Mary and Robert Schommer**,  
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**Julia Vanatta**, Twin Cities  
**Becky Wardell Gaertner**,  
Twin Cities

### GENERAL OPERATING FUND – CHAPTER SUPPORT

Twin Cities Chapter

### GENERAL OPERATING FUND - MATCHING DONATIONS

**Sharon Duerkop**, Thrivent,  
Fox Valley Area  
**Renee Benage**, Boeing, St. Louis

### IN-KIND DONATIONS

**Rosemary Eiden**, Fox Valley Area,  
outdoor tent/canopy  
**Cookie Fielkow**, Neenah,  
Wisconsin, vintage gardening  
books  
**Holly Rusch**, Sherwood, Wisconsin,  
duck house



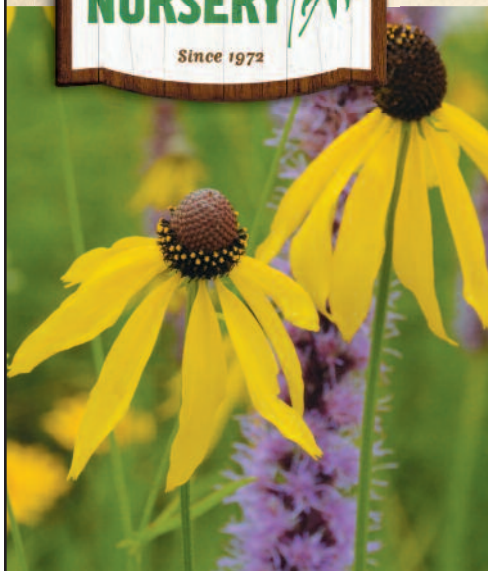
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PHOTO: Laura Haden

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