



Wild Ones[®]

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

JAN|FEB 2018 • Journal • VOL. 31, NO. 1



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

One of my father's enduring legacies was his insistence that we "take care of our tools and they will take care of us." I know the best time to take care of garden tools is in the fall when you wrap up garden work. However, I never seem to quite be done with putting my gardens to bed for the winter, so for me, the best time to take care of my tools is now — January or February.

Like you, I have my favorite tools that get special treatment. These are my "rock shovel" (a Maine design that actually works in rock-laden ground) and my stirrup weeder (yep; looks just like a stirrup and is magnificent for cutting weed roots just under the soil surface without disturbing nearby "good" plants). And, I do love my trowel, which sports a very sharp point (it's a cross between a traditional trowel and a Japanese hori hori knife) and has proven to be unbreakable, even after 3 years of abuse.

By now, I've pulled out boiled linseed oil for wood handles, my two sharpening stones and wire brushes for surface cleaning. I found the files I got specifically for putting a nice sharp edge on the shovels. I just need a nice stormy day for tool care inspiration.

As you might guess, I think about Wild Ones a lot. As I was planning my tools maintenance project, my mind made the connection between gardening tools – necessary to running a productive, happy garden – and the tools needed to keep Wild Ones "sharp."

I just finished a rather lengthy project reviewing and categorizing Wild Ones policies and guidelines, and it seems to me that our 17 policies are the tools we use to ensure that our organization makes thoughtful, consistent and fair decisions.

Where are these "tools" stored? Look in the "National Reports" section of the [members-only website](#). That is a new folder set up to allow members to more easily find our bylaws, annual reports and policies. In there are three new and newly revised policies I want to highlight:

Policy #3-Conflict of Interest. This policy has been updated to clarify that all Wild Ones directors, officers, members and employees must avoid the appearance – or the actuality – of receiving any benefit as a result of their status. All organizations should have a COI policy, and in our case, we must be able to say we do on our Form 990 filing.



Janice Hand, President

Policy #6-Sponsorship, Advertising and Promotion. This policy, also updated, clarifies that as a nonprofit organization, Wild Ones cannot accept "advertising" to support our educational publications, conferences and all mission-related events. The reason is that type of income is taxable (think forms, filings and fees). Instead, Policy #6 provides clear guidance on what we can accept as sponsorships and promotions.

Policy #11-Whistleblower Protection Policy. This is another policy that allows us to show we are a fully compliant organization on Form 990. This policy protects employees, volunteers, contractors and members who raise credible information about illegal practices or violations of Wild Ones policies.

Part of being a well-run organization is having a complete and routinely updated set of policies and guidelines in place. When you check the "National Reports" folder, you will find a plethora of policies, including the three listed above, and others that cover such issues as chapter officer elections, members' contact information, plant rescues, copyright and trademarks, emergency reserve fund, financial accounts and authorizations, membership in coalitions/similar groups, chapter name designations, prohibited legislative/political activities, newsletter publication, grants by chapters, year-end reports, publication of religious content and the partnership between Wild Ones national and chapters.

Together, all of those documents are admittedly not fascinating or light evening reading. But, they are necessary to ensure we have a well-run organization — just like clean, repaired tools are necessary to how well we can garden. (I will add that while I have never gotten blisters from policies, I most certainly have from my tools!)

Janice



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

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

Wild Ones' definition of a native plant:

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

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Member Garden

Marilynn and Tom Torkelson
Prairie Edge (Minnesota) Chapter

Photos by Tom Torkelson



Top: A rain garden with a pagoda or alternate-leaved dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*) in the rear of their home helps to improve water quality. Left: The Torkelsons proudly display their 2016 Spirit of Eden Prairie Award.

By Marilyn Jones

Twenty years ago, Marilyn and Tom Torkelson moved into their new home in the rolling suburb of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, about 20 miles west of Minneapolis. Traditional gardeners, their primary interest was growing veggies and their biggest crop was turf grass.

Their new home appealed to them because of a pond in the backyard and wide boulevards in the front. Marilyn and Tom loved to canoe and swim in Minnesota's ample waters with their two young children, and cared deeply about water stewardship issues.

For over a decade, the family enjoyed seeing the backyard pond attract geese, herons, egrets and songbirds. When Tom mowed the very large lawn, he left a buffer of tall grass between the lawn and the pond to protect the pond water from runoff. Their deep passion for clean water issues led the Torkelsons to seek information about wetland management.

Imagine their surprise to discover that the buffer they were maintaining was entirely nonnative reed canary grass, a major threat to natural wetlands and one that out competes most native species.

While taking a class on capturing stormwater in 2010, Marilyn learned stormwater

basics: that rain falls on impermeable surfaces, including roofs, driveways and compacted turf grass, and that it flows quickly into storm drains carrying pollutants that include salt, herbicides and excess nitrogen from fertilizers and pet waste. In Minnesota, storm drains empty directly into rivers, lakes and ponds.

But at this class, Marilyn was also introduced to the Wild Ones Twin Cities (Minnesota) Chapter's activities and native plant sale. She immediately joined Wild Ones and became an active member of the Twin Cities group, serving as the publicity chairwoman. Subsequently, she helped establish a seedling chapter that is now known as the Prairie Edge Chapter. It's a thriving chapter with Marilyn serving as president.

And in only five years, the Torkelson yard has morphed from a sterile, cement-like expansive lawn to an award-winning native plant habitat and wild refuge. They used the stormwater "treatment train" philosophy to install a variety of best management practices. The term, stormwater treatment train, has loosely been used since the mid-1980s to represent a series or variety of approaches to manage the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff.

Editor's Note

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

The Torkelsons started by developing rain gardens to capture all of the rainwater that fell on their 1/3-acre property. A series of changes included installing eave gutters to control the direction of roof runoff toward several backyard rain gardens. The treatment train, which turned the 12-degree slope of the front yard to the street into a 35-foot by 40-foot rain garden, included a primary garden, a short retaining wall, an additional soaking area, and a bermed boulevard

garden. This slowed down the storm water, reduced erosion, leveled storm surges and removed pollutants. The Torkelsons also restored the shoreline by removing invasive plants and planting natives in their place, such as swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*), sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) and common boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*).

All of this landscaping was also accompanied by ambitious and diverse native

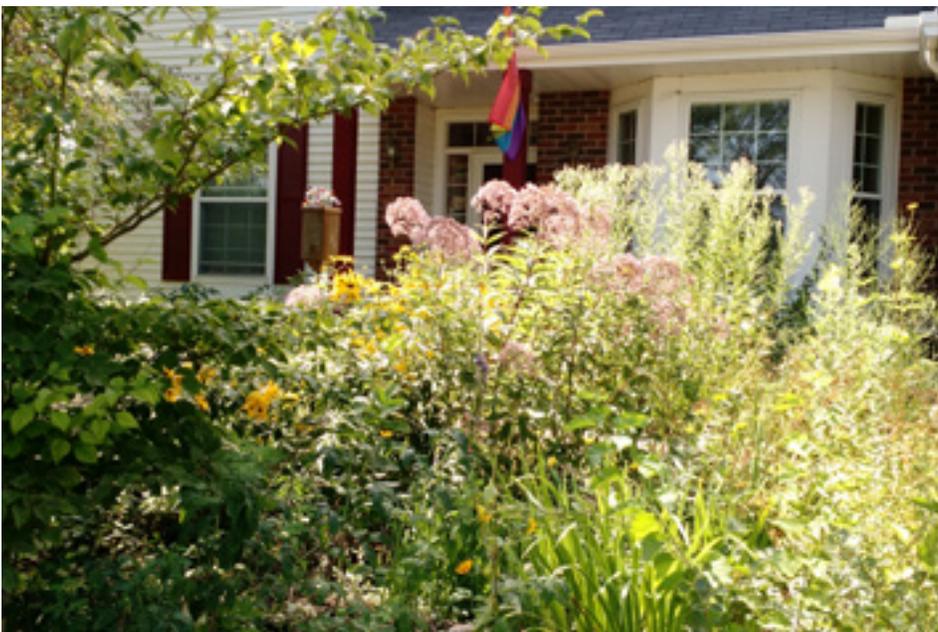
Clockwise from top: In fall, the Torkelson's yard is ablaze with color; A bermed boulevard garden helps to move rainwater; The front yard features a 35-foot by 40-foot rain garden.

About the Yard

- Their 1/3-acre property is located in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, about 20 miles west of Minneapolis.
- Currently, the Torkelsons have more than 150 species of native forbs, sedges, grasses, trees and shrubs.
- Marilyn has many favorite plants, including plantain leaved sedge, Jacob's ladder, anise hyssop and zigzag goldenrod.
- Their backyard pond attracts geese, herons, egrets and songbirds.

Member Garden

Marilynn and Tom Torkelson
Prairie Edge (Minnesota) Chapter





Member Garden
 Marilyn and Tom Torkelson
 Prairie Edge (Minnesota) Chapter

Tom and Marilyn enjoy sitting on one of their glider swings to watch nature.

plant installations. Currently, the Torkelsons have more than 150 species of native forbs, sedges, grasses, trees and shrubs. Marilyn has many favorite plants, but when pressed to name them, she admits to loving shade plants like plantain-leaved or seersucker sedge (*Carex plantaginea*), Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*), anise hyssop

(*Agastache foeniculum*), zigzag goldenrod (*Solidago flexicaulis*) and wild quinine (*Parthenium integrifolium*), whose flowers bloom and remain pure white for months.

In a true "build it and they will come" story, there is now a lot of wildlife activity happening and their yard has come to life.

With the native plant stalks providing winter interest, an array of animal tracks can be seen in the snow in their yard — and a blank slate of snow in the neighbor's yard.

Last summer, Heather Holm, author of "Pollinators of Native Plants" and "Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide," discovered a healthy variety of native bees in the Torkelson's yard, including the rare and endangered rusty patched bumblebee. The birds, frogs, butterflies, moths, native bees and small mammals provide a clamor of color and activity in this biodiverse habitat. And the peoples' lifestyle has improved, too, as Tom only has to mow some paths through the gardens. He and Marilyn also enjoy the waterside quiet in a double glider swing.

The community recently took notice of this beautiful yard, and in 2016, the Torkelsons were awarded the Spirit of Eden Prairie Award that "recognizes significant investment and enhancements ... to overall vitality, accessibility and sustainability of the community."

Surrounded by acres of neighbors' mowed lawns, their home shows the community how to bring a yard back to life. Indeed, if you plant it, pollinators and animals, as well as the whole community, will benefit.

Marilyn Jones is past president of the Twin Cities (Minnesota) Chapter of Wild Ones.



Even in winter, the Torkelson's yard is beautiful.

NEWS

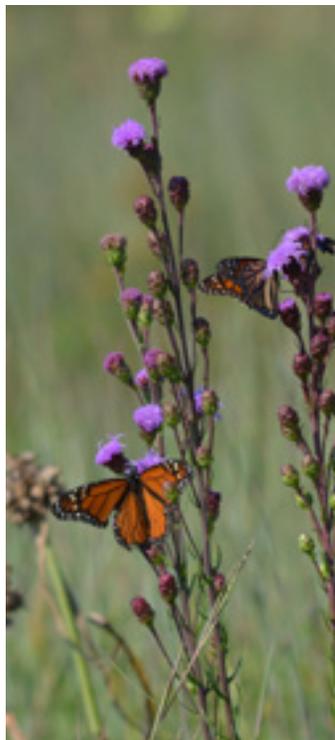
ACROSS THE NATION

INDIANA

A butterfly sanctuary is now located along the Urban Wilderness Trail in White River State Park in downtown Indianapolis. Community organizations recently created the sanctuary with the help of many volunteers.

[WFYI](#) reported the sanctuary is composed of more than 2,600 pollinator-friendly native plants and shrubs, including milkweed.

Volunteers hope a new sanctuary filled with 2,600 native plants will bring more monarchs and other pollinators to downtown Indianapolis.



MICHIGAN

The Great Lakes Commission and Lawrence Technological University are teaming up to protect the Great Lakes by changing the way cities think about rainwater.

[Michigan Radio](#) reported the two groups want to explore new ways communities can handle stormwater to prevent things like flooding and sewage overflow into the lakes.

Michael Polich, program specialist with the Great Lakes Commission, said cities often view alternate stormwater technologies as different and untested, making them hesitant to implement new ideas. But he said treatment plants in communities that utilize combined sewer systems could become overloaded during heavier rain.

The partnership will look at alternate methods for handling stormwater including rain gardens, barrels and storm sceptors, which swirl water around in a pipe, releasing sediment and nutrients, and encourage cities to implement them.



Worldwide, there are more than 175,000 species of moths and butterflies. In North America, there are more than 30,000 species. Although some species are easy to recognize in photos, the majority can be quite challenging to identify.

But LepSnap, a free smartphone app, uses the latest image recognition artificial intelligence to make identification much easier, according to "The Ohio Lepidopterist." Learn more [here](#).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers a free Bee Basics Book that can be downloaded [here](#).

The 48-page book, an introduction to native bees, is written by Beatriz Moisset and Stephen Buchmann, and is a USDA Forest Service and Pollinator Partnership publication. It contains information on bee anatomy or morphology, nesting practices, foraging needs, families of bees and more, and includes detailed illustrations by Steve Buchanan.



UTAH

President Donald Trump signed a proclamation in December to formally downsize Bears Ears National Monument by 85 percent or 201,876 acres. The announcement came just one year after Obama declared the 1.35 million acres of land, which is sacred to Native Americans and home to tens of thousands of archaeological sites, to be a national monument, [CBS](#) reported.

Located in southeastern Utah, the land contains red rock canyons, and Native American artifacts, dwellings and other ruins.

Trump used the Antiquities Act, an act that "grants the president the authority to create national monuments." This act mandates national monuments be "confined to the smallest area compatible with proper care and management of the objects to be protected." Since the announcement, five Native American tribes have sued the Trump administration in regards to "attempting to, in effect, abolish the Bears Ears National Monument."

Trump is also reducing another nearby national monument, the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, by 45 percent.

VIRGINIA

The [Flora of Virginia](#) app is out for both Android and iOS devices.

Both the online version and the new app are adapted from "*Flora of Virginia*," published in 2012 by the Flora Partnership in partnership with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The book, in the works for a decade, is the first comprehensive look at Virginia flora since the 1700s. It describes 2,300 plants native or naturalized in Virginia.

WISCONSIN

The Holy Wisdom Monastery began to restore 30 acres of its landscape to oak savanna in November.

Oak savanna is considered to be Wisconsin's rarest plant community by the state Department of Natural Resources, [WISC](#) reported.

Greg Armstrong, director of land management and environmental education, said the monastery was starting by planting oak trees. "Oak trees are fire-tolerant and can easily survive the prescribed burns that will mimic the fire conditions of pre-settlement Wisconsin," he said. "When the trees are more mature, in another 20 years or so, we will then add in some signature savanna understory plants, some of which are now rare and little-known."

The monastery, a retreat and meeting center in Middleton, was established in 1953, and offers environmental education and spirituality programs.

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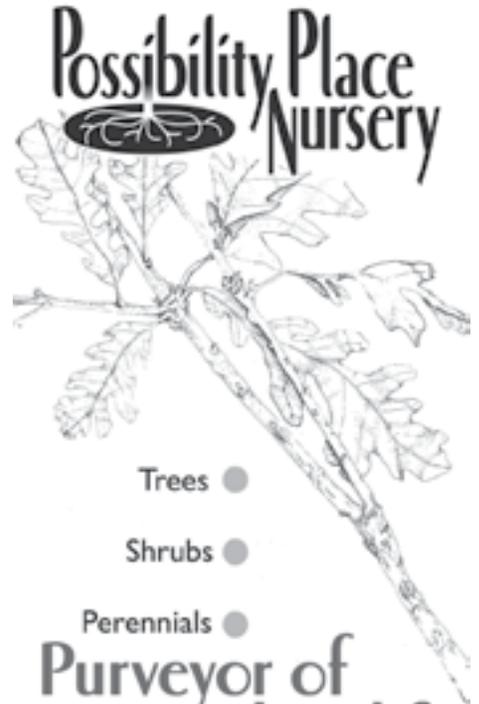
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SFE grant funds Roosevelt High School pollinator habitat



Students from Roosevelt High School's Urban Farm learned about natural landscaping and the importance of native plants to pollinators, thanks to a Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant.

Roosevelt High School students in Minneapolis, Minnesota, created a Bee-Haven Pollinator Habitat, thanks to a Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant.

Project coordinator Rhiannon Dalrymple wrote in their first-year report that the gardens were prepared and planted by students in Roosevelt's Urban Farm Squad ecology elective for two subsequent school years. These classes include mixed-age students from freshmen to seniors who have a high diversity of student learning abilities.

Dalrymple wrote that the first-year students weeded, cleared and solarized their main garden sites. Then the students in the subsequent class finished weeding, and planted and mulched the sites.

Moving the mulch to the gardens via wheelbarrows was one of the students' least favorite jobs.



"We have planted a high diversity of both prairie and woodland species of flowering plants and a number of grasses in our garden sites," she wrote. "As our sites are a mix of sunny and shady locations, it has been important for us to plant species where they have the best chance of success."

Dalrymple said the school planted 51 species of native plants, all ordered from Prairie Restorations. Then they focused on making sure the gardens received adequate water when temperatures soared.

"The project has thus far been a great success, and the students have not only enjoyed the large and tactile nature of the project, but have also taken pride in its completion," she wrote.

She said the students learned about the importance of rain gardens, native plant habitats and prairies for native pollinators. "Installing the gardens was a lot of hard work, sometimes on hot days and sometimes in cold and dreary weather," she said. But she said the students were diligent in spreading out the mulch, even if they did complain a bit before the site preparation was finished and the trays of seedlings arrived.

"They enjoyed looking at the labels of the plants in the trays, googling the species and the conditions they liked, and putting the plants where they felt they would be most successful," Dalrymple said. "Having the whole garden come together and be completed has been a great joy for them. The change in the site from its old state as an overgrown, weed-ridden and rather ugly mess to its new neatly mulched, well planted and diverse plot has gained much praise and enthusiasm from passers-by and the general school community."

Still, many people don't understand its significance, she said. "The students often engage other students, teachers or community members who walk by while we work on it," Dalrymple said, adding that informational signs yet to be installed about native plants will be an important addition.

For the future, they hope to add more native plants and increase diversity, help teachers learn how to use the project area more effectively, and engage kids. Dalrymple said the site is sometimes used as an outdoor classroom, and biology teachers use the area when teaching about plant-animal and plant-plant interactions.

Dalrymple said students need to be actively involved in the care and maintenance of the gardens, if they are to understand, show interest and take ownership over the project. Roosevelt High School students are involved in the ongoing care with weeding in the fall and spring, watering until the roots are well established, planting new seedlings, and more.



After the site work was complete, Roosevelt High School students got to do what they most looked forward to — the planting!

*"The change in the site from its old state as an overgrown, weed-ridden and rather ugly mess to its new neatly mulched, well planted and diverse plot has gained much praise and enthusiasm from passers-by and the general school community."
— Rhiannon Dalrymple*



Showing Off Work — Students from Roosevelt High School's Urban Farm show off the new natural landscaping sites.

Self-taught artist illustrates nature close-up

By Barbara A. Schmitz

If practice makes perfect, as the saying goes, it is clear why Sigrid Neilsen is such an accomplished artist, particularly of native plants.

Neilsen grew up running barefoot in Florida swamps and keeping detailed field journals, inspired by Euell Gibbons and the Foxfire books.

"I sat for hours drawing and coloring everything I found on the spot, and I had the bug bites to prove it," she said. Neilsen said she was especially interested in fungi, thanks to her Lithuanian great-grandmother who collected and ate them — and lived to tell about it, too.

"I managed to get a hold of an old college microscope and made spore prints and slides, adding drawings of spores and microscopic observations to my field notes," she said. "I also drew orchids, spiders and lizards and generally anything that caught my eye."

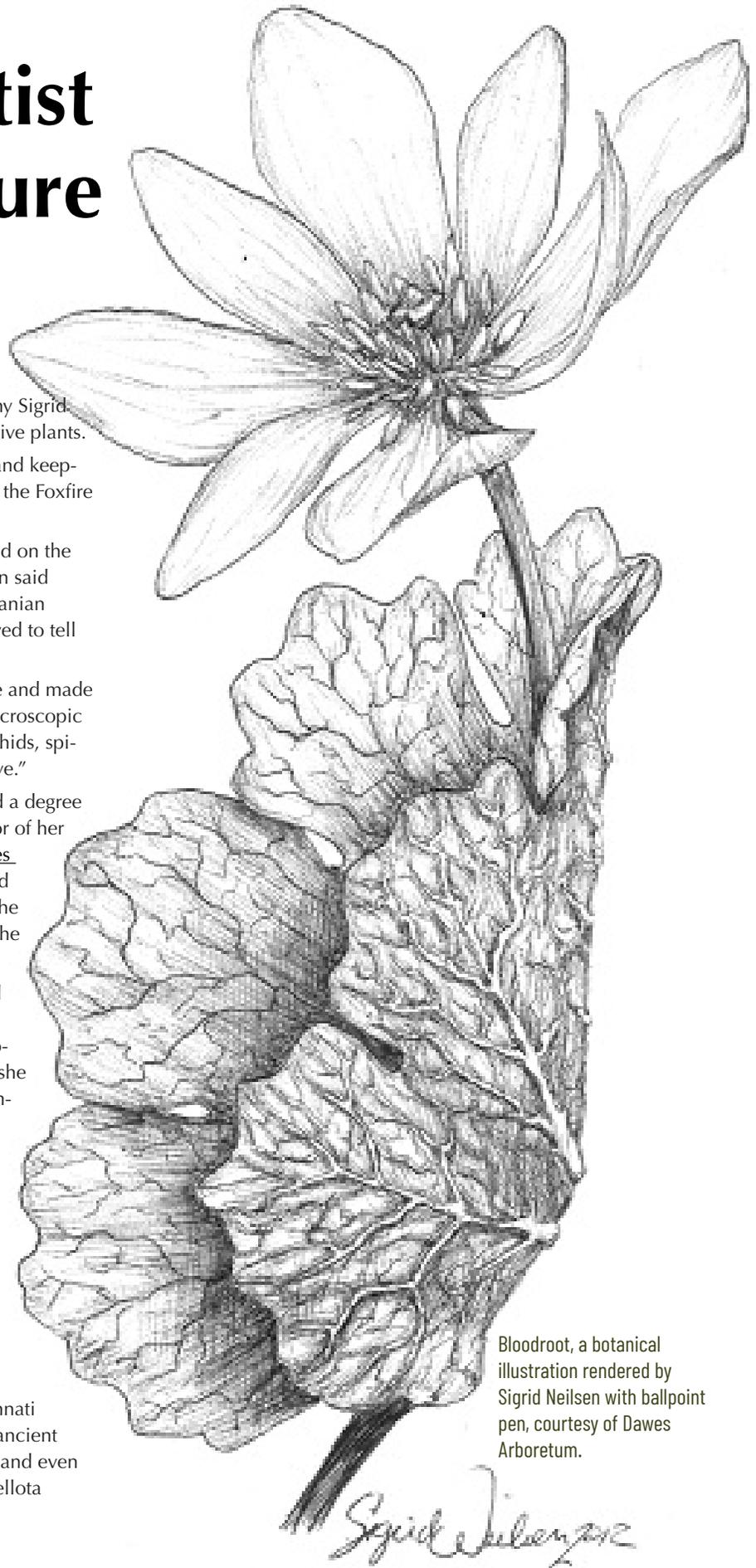
Neilsen eventually moved to Ohio, where she pursued a degree in biology and discovered that David Brandenburg, author of her favorite wildflower guide, worked in Newark at the Dawes Arboretum. "So I literally showed up on his doorstep, field journal in hand, and told him I wanted to learn anything he cared to teach me and would work on whatever projects he would let me," she said.

Their first project was "*Native Asters of Ohio*," created mainly with a 9-cent BIC ballpoint pen. "We created an illustrated version of a dichotomous key that made a notoriously difficult group of plants manageable for anyone," she said. "I organized all my drawings into a book that accompanied the key."

The work was such a success that when the Midwest Native Plant Conference requested they work on oaks, it was only natural that another illustrated key and book would follow.

Neilsen said she makes both oak and aster keys available for free on her website since they are invaluable learning resources. The oak book and key is definitive for 14 states and useful for many more. The keys can also be found in the books.

Neilsen said she recently gave a program to the Cincinnati Wildflower Preservation Society where she explored the ancient and modern relationships between man, nature and oak, and even served acorn-derived foods like Korean acorn jelly and bellota acorn liquor.



Bloodroot, a botanical illustration rendered by Sigrid Neilsen with ballpoint pen, courtesy of Dawes Arboretum.



Above: One of Sigrid Neilsen's more fantastic pieces, Life Eaters, displays predatory plants and creatures that all really do exist. She used ballpoint pen and watercolor. Above, right: Sigrid Neilsen inspects a big leaf magnolia at Dawes Arboretum.

"I believe people need to form a relationship with nature in order to preserve it, so in addition to teaching people how to recognize and classify things like oaks, I introduce them to the amazing ways our own existence is shaped by the natural world around us in order to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation," she said. "I hope that experiencing nature will kindle the drive to protect it. I aim to inspire that same curiosity and awe with my more fantastic artworks of the natural world."

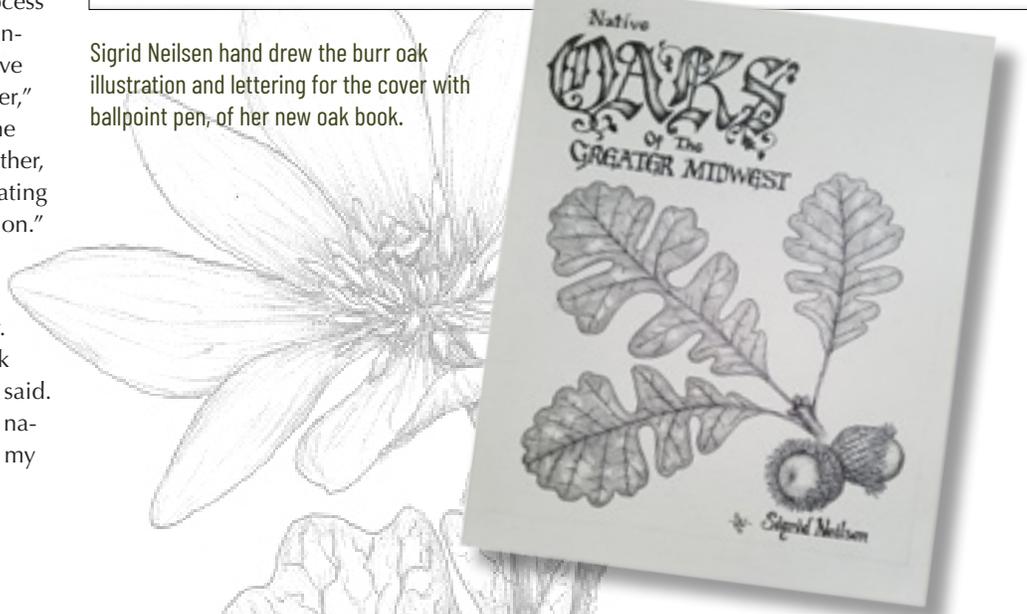
She said drawing is a meditative process for her, and her drawings have little planning or forethought. "They tend to evolve with my knowledge of the subject matter," she said. "Discovery of the minutiae, the nearly invisible way things are put together, fit together, and work together is fascinating and drawing it is a map of my exploration."

Despite having a toddler daughter named Lili with her husband, Aaron, Neilsen said she still finds time to draw. "She has actually inspired more artwork from me rather than hindered me," she said. "I love showing her all the cool stuff in nature and she goes along with me on all my research adventures."

Learn more at sigridneilsen.com.



Sigrid Neilsen hand drew the burr oak illustration and lettering for the cover with ballpoint pen, of her new oak book.



All photos/illustrations courtesy Sigrid Neilsen

UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM: 8 revolutionary ideas for your garden



By Jeanne Rostaing

When you meet landscape architect Thomas Rainer, he comes across as a pleasant, mild-mannered fellow ... not at all the type to be traveling around the world, spouting ideas calculated to upend years and years of conventional gardening wisdom. As he writes in his preface to “*Planting in a Post-Wild World: Designing Plant Communities for Resilient Landscapes*,” the 2015 book he wrote with Claudia West, his ideas come from his time as a boy in suburban Birmingham, Alabama, where he spent countless happy hours roaming a stretch of indigenous Piedmont forest near his home. His playground was lost to development when he was in high school. As an adult, he still mourns its loss. But he is also a realist who understands that the world-wide development juggernaut is not to be stopped and that the original spaces that are lost can never truly be put back as they were.

Instead, in his work as a landscape designer, educator, author — and now partner with West and his wife, Melissa, in the new landscape design firm Phyto Studio — Rainer has developed a horticulture philosophy that advocates transforming the green spaces that remain (including such unpromising remnants as hell strips, the edges of parking lots and the tops of buildings) into vigorous, low-maintenance landscapes that mimic the way plants grow together naturally. As a result, Rainer asks us to use methods that fly in the face of how gardeners have worked the land for generations.

Read on for his “do’s and don’ts” for growing an earth-friendly garden that produces better results with less work.

1. Amending the Soil: **DON'T**

Conventional site preparation encourages amending the existing soil until it resembles a kind of generic potting mixture: loose, friable, deeply fertile black dirt. However, Rainer says, “Plants don’t want generic soil; they want specific soil.” Far better, he says, to choose plants that will thrive in the soil you have, rather than trying to create an artificial

environment for plants that wouldn’t naturally grow where you want to plant them.

2. Double Digging: **DON'T**

When I started gardening in the early 1990s, books I consulted advised preparing planting beds using a back-breaking method called double digging—whereby layers of soil were removed from the bed, mixed with plenty of amendments and replaced. When I asked Rainer if double digging is obsolete, he assured me that it certainly is unless you have a site with severely compacted soil. He says double digging and other methods of site preparation such as tilling destroy the natural soil layers, disturb helpful mycorrhizae (the mutually beneficial underground relationships that form between plant roots and fungi), and create perfect conditions for weeds and invasive species.

3. Soil Testing: **DO**

Rainer is not totally opposed to giving some help to young plants. He advises having your soil tested by a reputable lab so that you can make informed choices of plants that will adapt well to your garden. He says if you have 4 percent to 5 percent organic matter,



Photo by Heather Carter

Above: It is better to study plants in the wild and use them in our gardens the way they would appear in nature. An eastern tiger swallowtail nectars on *Liatris spicata*.

Below: Test your soil to make sure the plants you want to plant will thrive in your type of soil.



Photo: Pixabay



Don't hold back. It is better to plant generously.



Photo by Barbara A. Schmitz

there is no need for amendments. Some modest additions to the soil when young plants are installed, such as compost tea and a light compost top dressing, are usually all that is needed to give seedlings the boost they need to adapt to their new environment.

4. **Mulching: DON'T**

Ditch the mulch, and use plants instead. Rainer bemoans the American love affair with mulch and says it is far better to cover bare garden soil with plants. Perennial ground covers will discourage weeds better than mulch and, once established, will require far less work than mulch, which breaks down and must be replenished or replaced. Underplanting structural shrubs with softer-looking ground covers such as sedges, wild ginger or coral bells provides an attractive contrast between the two very different types of plants and looks more natural than a lone shrub surrounded by swaths of wood chips or ground-up bark.

5. **Planting Cover Crops: DO**

Cover crops are not just for farmers. Rather than feeding your garden with compost or other material, use cover crops on bare soil. On empty spots where perennials have died back or annuals have run out of steam in the fall, plant a shallow-rooted crop such as the fracking forage radish (*Raphanus sativus*), which can be planted in August or September for green coverage all winter in warmer locations. In the spring, when it dies, its stems and leaves as well as its roots

will break down, adding nutrients without any disturbance to the soil. In addition, the decaying roots will help to aerate the soil and prevent compaction.

6. **Curbside Planting: DO**

When laying out a garden, let nature be your guide — and don't leave plants isolated with lots of bare or mulch-covered space around them. For far too long, he says, we have treated plants as individual artifacts arbitrarily placed in designs that largely ignore their needs. It is much better, he says, to study plants in the wild and use them in our gardens the way they would appear in nature, as part of a plant community with common cultural needs. In natural settings plants tend to form interdependent groups where each type of plant works with the others to make the most of limited sunlight, water and nutrients.

7. **Buying A Lot of Plants: DO**

Don't hold back; plant generously. To get a new garden fully planted, you will initially need many plants. Rainer advises investing in a few key large specimens and buying everything else as small as possible.

When you buy a large perennial from a nursery, you are paying a lot for a plant that was nurtured in a perfect environment. But, Rainer points out, your garden will not offer the same climate-controlled greenhouse conditions. He says it's better to start with smaller, younger specimens that will adapt to

a new environment faster. To get full coverage, use plugs (small-size seedlings) and plant a lot of them. The less disturbance the better when installing plants so one of Rainer's recommended methods is to drill narrow holes in the soil with an auger and then drop in the tiny plants.

8. **Experimenting and Having Fun: DO**

Rainer's final tip is one that is often forgotten amid the chores of gardening. "Have fun," he says. "Gardens are not meant to endure, but to enchant. The life is what is important. Gardening should be a joy."

Jeanne Rostaing holds a Silver Award from the Garden Writers of America and is a frequent contributor to the gardening and lifestyle website Gardenista. She writes for the Brooklyn Botanic Garden website and holds a certificate in horticulture from BBC and has served as a first round judge for the annual Brooklyn's Greenest Block Contest. She has been the coordinator for Plant-O-Rama, an annual symposium and trade show produced by the Metro Hort Group, a Manhattan-based organization for horticulture professionals. Formerly a national television news writer and producer, Jeanne is happy to be writing about the joys of gardens and plants after many years of covering politics, wars, terrorist attacks, natural disasters and other catastrophes.

Printed, with permission, from *Gardenista*.

Member helps to persuade village to outlaw buckthorn

Wild Ones members likely join the nonprofit natural landscaping organization to learn more about native plants. But Ney Collier reminds us that you can also make a difference by educating your elected officials about natural landscaping.

Collier has been a Wild Ones member for about three decades, becoming interested in native plants after neighbors started spraying chemicals on their lawns, which then drifted onto her property. At a friend's suggestion, she contacted Lorrie Otto who got her started in native landscaping.

Collier met Douglas H. Frazer, the newly elected president of the Fox Point Village Board, when he attended some meetings of the Friends of Doctor's Park. She took that opportunity to educate him about native plants. The group is planting native plants and removing invasive plants like buckthorn, garlic mustard and burdock at the park, which is located on the shores of Lake Michigan.

"I took him on a tour of Doctor's Park to point out areas where native plants had returned after decades of weeding," she said. She also suggested the Village Board pass an ordinance that would prohibit invasive species like common or European buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*).

In turn, Frazer asked Collier to compile a list of reasons why buckthorn should be eliminated. She submitted the list, which was then shared with all the board members of this small village located along the North Shore area of the Milwaukee metropolitan area in Wisconsin.

Her list included about 15 reasons, some of which are included below, why buckthorn should be outlawed:

- It is an aggressive, nonnative, weedy shrub that replaces our native plants and dramatically reduces biodiversity.
- Buckthorn has a longer growing season. Its leaves remain green well into winter and it can out compete even shade-tolerant trees like sugar maples.



Ney Collier, right, with Lorrie Otto, who was a passionate advocate of natural landscaping using native plants. Otto joined Wild Ones shortly after Gini Lindlow founded it.

Buckthorn dramatically reduces species diversity of native songbirds and species diversity in woodland areas and other plant communities.

- It creates a dark, dense understory monoculture with no herb layer. This affects insects like butterflies that suffer from lack of nectar and native host plants for their larvae.
- Buckthorn increases erosion because it shades out the understory. There is only bare ground in a buckthorn "disclimax forest."
- It prevents trees from regenerating. Tree seedlings cannot survive in dense buckthorn thickets.
- It also dramatically reduces species diversity of native songbirds and species diversity in woodland areas and other plant communities. Buckthorn in wetlands such as wet prairies not only shades out native species, but it also re-

duces available water, thereby changing the ecology of the plant community.

- Properties infested with buckthorn could decrease in value since it is costly and time consuming to identify and remove its thickets.

On Nov. 14, the board passed an ordinance that outlaws additional weeds within the village boundaries, including common buckthorn and garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*).

Collier said Frazer realized that the weeding efforts undertaken by the friends group were futile if the park was surrounded by properties infested with invasives. "I think you could say the outcome of passing the ordinance was a group effort," she said.

LANDSCAPE CONNECTIVITY: A critical wildlife garden concept

By Rhiannon Crain

Landscape connectivity is a critical concept in ecology. Not only do many species of plants and animals rely on connected patches of land to move around their territories, find mates, hunt, forage and reproduce, people also find them desirable additions to urban and suburban landscapes for recreation and access to nature.

When people settle into a region, they change the landscape in dramatic ways. They build roads and clear vegetation for houses and crops. This breaks the landscape up, separating natural areas from each other with open spaces and developments. This kind of developed countryside is very recognizable from an airplane.

Ecologists talk about landscapes with some helpful vocabulary. A *patch* is a significant natural area, a space large enough for a particular species to successfully carry out some part of its life cycle. A patch for a species of snail might be much smaller than a patch for a large mammal like a mountain lion. When you look at a landscape from above, you might be able to identify *stepping stones*, or smaller natural areas that act like discontinuous pathways between two larger patches. These stepping stones can act as resources for seeds or animals moving between larger patches. *Corridors*, like stepping stones, connect larger patches of habitat to one another allowing movement of organisms from one refuge to the next.

The ability to move safely between patches of habitat is critical for maintaining healthy populations of all kinds of organisms. Ecologists talk about this as ‘habitat connectivity,’ and more important than how a patch is connected, is whether it is connected at all. Organisms can move between patches connected with a corridor or they can move between stepping stone patches as long as they are close enough. Too great a distance without some kind of linkage means organisms can’t (or won’t) move between two patches.

One of the reasons it is so important for organisms to access other habitat patches in a fragmented landscape is to help maintain a healthy breeding population of individuals.

Developed countryside, such as this view of Dubuque and the Mississippi River, is very recognizable from an airplane.

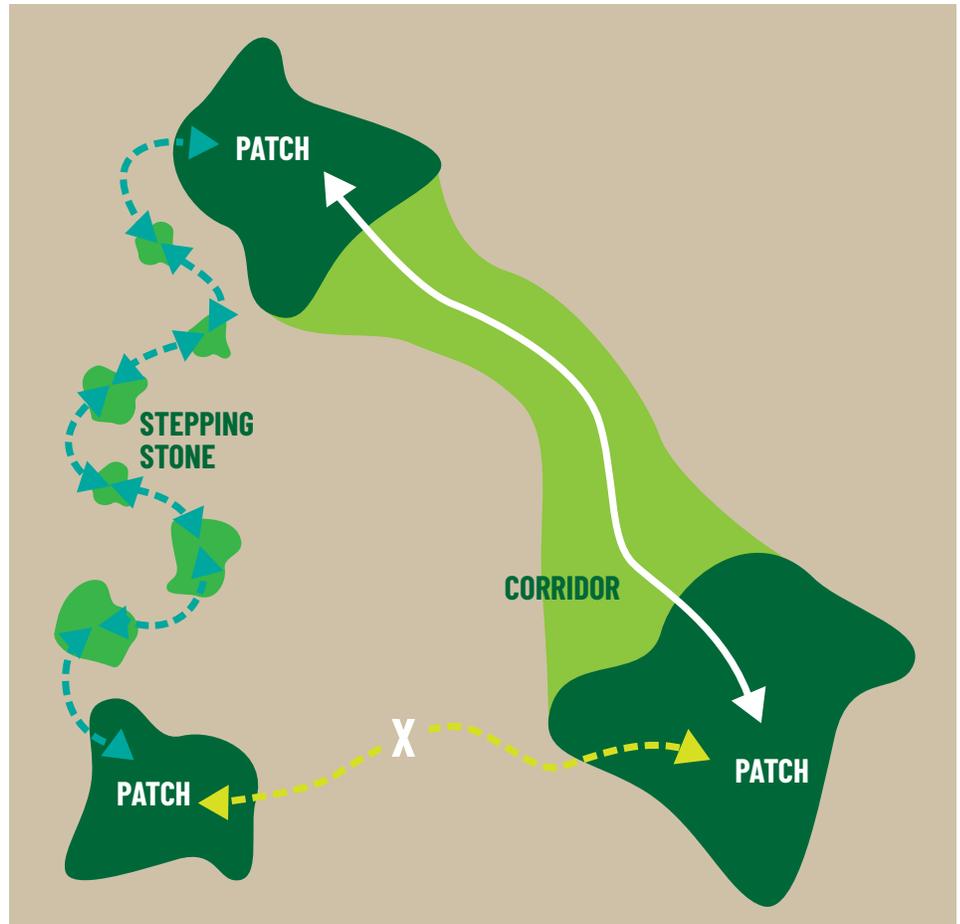


Photo by Sarah Benish



When a patch is too small, and the population too isolated, the gene pool for a particular species may become too limited, making it vulnerable to inbreeding and disease. Closer proximity between patches allows for greater population (and genetic) exchanges and may strengthen the overall population of a species in a given area.

Patch connectivity isn't the whole story though. Have you ever walked deep into a forest and noticed that it just *feels different* when you are in the middle than it does when you are near edges? Animals recognize this difference, too, and have adapted to fill specialized interior forest ecological niches. Some species, like wood thrush, ovenbirds, and scarlet tanagers, require interior forested spaces a certain distance from the edge (often defined for birds as at least 300 feet from any edge) to meet their habitat needs. Patches that are too small lack those special



Looking at a town through a landscape ecologist's lens allows you to identify possible corridors, habitat patches and stepping stones in a community.

interior conditions, even though they occupy the same *amount* of absolute space. One reason interior habitats are different from edge habitats is the accessibility of the edges to predators found in more open and urban areas. Cats, dogs, crows, jays and raccoons all prey on nestlings and fledglings, and their abundance increases the closer you go to a forest edge, explained Soule and Gilpin in their 1991 study, "The Theory of Wildlife Corridor Capability."

A yard doesn't exist in a vacuum. It always has a relationship with the landscape around it, both immediate – that which abuts your property – and more distant – that which makes up the greater landscape in your neighborhood and town. Looking at a town through a landscape ecologist's lens allows you to identify possible corridors, habitat patches and stepping stones in a community.



Top: You can also see the existing tree canopy of your neighborhood using Google Satellite. Center: By mapping your neighborhood tree line you can identify places where trees should be planted to complete corridors or stepping stones. Bottom: Cities and countryside look like a jigsaw puzzle from an airplane. But those views allow you to see patterns of connectivity.

Photo by Sarah Benish



When people settle into a region, they change the landscape in dramatic ways. They build roads and clear vegetation for houses and crops. This kind of developed countryside is very recognizable from an airplane.

Stepping back to look at your property this way can help you make important management decisions for your yard. Perhaps your yard can become a critical stepping stone between more isolated stepping stones, increasing the connectivity for wildlife as they move between patches. The diversity of urban habitats – spaces like parks, cemeteries and residential yards – break-up potential patches because they are often very different from one another. But, careful design and maintenance of these spaces can have important implications for their contribution to the quality of the local matrix.

There are several ways a yard might productively supplement the existing wild landscape. If a property abuts a larger patch you might “buffer” that patch by leaving as much of the adjoining yard space as possible in ‘matching’ habitat, thereby increasing the area of the patch.

Perhaps your property sits between two stepping stones and by changing your plantings you can “connect” those stepping stones to create a corridor, increasing the flow of different organisms across a yard.

Or, as is the case for many people, a yard more isolated from larger patches can become a stepping stone with the right plantings, creating a “bridge” between other nearby stepping stones.

Whatever your situation, there is rarely

an instance where getting your neighbors involved doesn’t immediately amplify the impacts of your yards. In many towns the spaces in the middle of blocks, where several smaller backyards come together, are some of the largest remaining habitat fragments in urban areas. They can be valuable resources for birds, pollinators and even amphibians and reptiles.

So, consider gathering your backyard neighbors and working together to amplify your space. This could be as simple as holding a Habitat Party and pulling up your neighborhood on a satellite map or on Habitat Network and analyzing the existing tree canopy on each property. Once you’ve done that you can work together to propose new native trees to collectively plant to fill out your habitat patch. Working with neighbors has the added benefit of helping to change neighborhood norms about what landscaping *should* look like as well.

Residential yards may be relatively small, but, because they make up such a large portion of most urban landscapes (up to 35 percent of green space in some cities!) they have the potential to be major players in any efforts to change the overall landscape. These kinds of spaces tend to be intensively managed (think about mowing, trimming and paving). Decreasing that intensity of management may offer one of the greatest opportunities to increase the functional area

of vegetation that is often the base of natural landscapes. Sometimes decreasing the management practices, even a bit, would let the more diverse vegetation around the site creep in and substantially increase the area available for a diversity of organisms.

Extending vegetative structure into a yard, especially with vertical elements, increases the space an organism can utilize to forage, attract a mate, nest or seek shelter. Great vertical elements to consider include single trees with large crowns, tree groupings, shrub plantings, and even vines growing on a trellis or other structures. Each of these could increase multi-functionality of a space. If you are worried about not meeting others’ landscaping expectations, you’ll be especially interested in the March/April article by me in this journal on tricks you can use to increase the functional area of vegetation in your yard, while keeping neighbors happy.

Rhiannon Crain, Ph.D., is project leader of the Habitat Network Citizen Science Project. She earned a bachelor’s degree in ecology and evolutionary biology from the University of Arizona and her doctorate degree in science education from UC Santa Cruz’s Center for Informal Learning and Schools. She has worked at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to help document the Habitat Gardening movement since January 2010.

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Check out the Butterfly House of Wisconsin, N2550 State Rd 47, Appleton



Watch Them Grow

Prairies Planted

South 10th St, Manitowac	30th Street, Manitowac
Castle Oak, Neenah	Commerce Pond, Neenah
South Native Trails, Neenah	Sullivan Pond, Fond du Lac
Pendellon Pond, Neenah	South Park, Neenah
Copps, Neenah	US Venture, Appleton
West Town, Neenah	Nut Hatch Overseed, Sherwood
Sunset Park Overseed, Kimberly	Macco Pond, Green Bay
Amy Ave - McMahon, Darboy	Mike Arien's, Brillion
Springfield Restoration, Darboy	Dewey Street Pond, Manitowoc
Wolf River Bank, Hortonville	
SCA Tissue, Town of Menasha	
Roehl Truck Hwy 88, Appleton	

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- Retaining walls – natural and block (green and plantable)
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Maintenance

- Prairie burns
- Restoration
- Bio-detention
- Weed & invasive species control

Special Thanks to Stuart at McMahon Engineers for all his professional advice.

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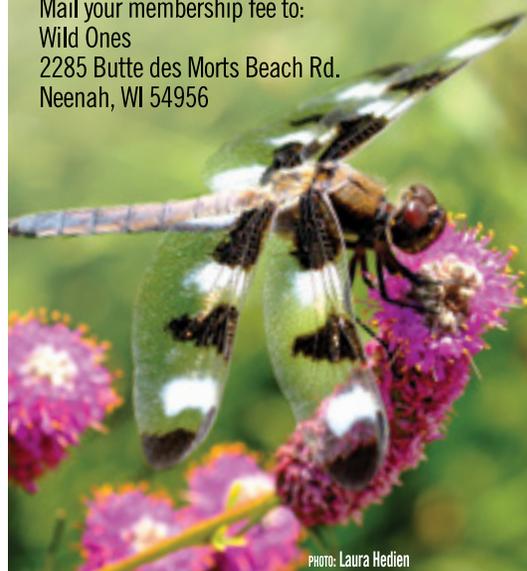


PHOTO: Laura Hedien



Fungi, lichens help create winter wonderland

By Rob Zimmer

Winter is one of the best times of the year to explore forests and discover the many wonders of fungi and lichens that decorate the woodland trees, rocks, stumps and snags.

A closer look at the beautiful colors, textures and forms of the hundreds of mushrooms, fungi and lichens that adorn forest trees reveals a stunning world that's thriving.

Discovering the wonders of mushrooms, fungi and lichens is a wonderful outdoor hobby and you will always find new treasures awaiting you in nature if you look closely. You may even discover something amazing. In recent years, the planet's largest living organism was found in a forest of Oregon. The specimen was a honey mushroom, a common type of mushroom found in Wisconsin, which sprawled some 2,400 acres and was nearly 3.5 miles wide. Scientists reported that the mushroom (*Armillaria ostoyae*) is a single organism, making it far larger than any dinosaur, blue whale or redwood tree that has ever lived.

Explore a nature center, park or wildlife area near you on foot, snowshoe or cross country skis this winter and look closely at the forest trees and discover a whole new side of winter wildlife. Here is a look at some of the common fungi and lichens you may discover on your winter woodland journeys.



Greenshield lichen is abundant in forests and can usually be identified by its circular pattern. Photo by Wikimedia.

Common Greenshield lichen

Once you learn to spot this common forest lichen, you'll be surprised how abundant greenshield lichen (*Flavoparmelia caperata*) truly is. In some areas, thousands of acres of trees may be decorated with the textured, sea green-to-grayish colored lichen. Lichens are interesting in that they are created when fungus and algae join together to form a new organism through symbiosis. Greenshield lichen is the common, wrinkled, leaf-like lichen, often in circular patterns, commonly found along the trunks of trees out in the open.

False Earthstar

One of the most unusual fungi, the false earthstar (*Astraeus hygrometricus*) gets its name from the sprawling, star-shaped pattern formed by the outer layer of the puffball-like mushroom. The outer layer splits off, forming arms like an octopus or star, which form a ring around the central sphere. There are several species of true earthstars (*Geastrum spp.*) found in the Midwest, most of them found in dry, sandy areas, especially on dunes, and near oaks and pines.

British soldiers

Anyone who has explored around forests with stumps and fallen logs has seen the tiny, scarlet-tipped lichens known as British soldiers (*Cladonia cristatella*). Quite common in wooded areas, especially conifer forests and damp areas, British soldiers form erect stalks that may reach up to an inch high and are tipped or painted in bright red.

Reindeer lichen

Often confused with Spanish moss, gray reindeer lichens (*Cladonia rangiferina*) grow along the ground or cling to the twigs and branches of forest trees. Reindeer lichens form stringy, ashy gray-to-whitish colored irregular masses of loosely entangled stems and branches. In some areas, a huge amount of this lichen covers forest floors, especially in sandy soils, or exposed sandstone areas, providing an important ground cover and



Photo by Rob Zimmer

Bracket fungi can be identified by their “shelf.”



Photo by Wikimedia

False earthstar is one of the most unusual fungi found on sandy soils in the forest.

shelter for insects, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Reindeer lichens grow extremely slowly, so these large mats may be hundreds of years old. Be careful not to walk directly over them.

Lemon drops

Looking like splattered paint along fallen logs or bare snags on the forest floor, lemon drops (*Bisporella citrina*) are brightly colored, miniature, cupped fungi that bring a bit of summer to the wintry forest. Bright lemon yellow, colonies of these tiny mushrooms can number in the thousands along moisture-laden logs and stumps of hardwoods without bark. Sometimes these tiny mushrooms are called yellow fairy cups. They are quite common, despite their tiny size. Once you learn to identify them, you’ll be amazed how often you encounter them.

Birch polypore

There are dozens of polypores, or bracket fungi, found in the woods in winter and learning to identify them all is a fun and interesting hobby. Often, nature lovers can identify polypores by the type of tree on which they are found. Bracket fungi grow outward from the trunk or branches, like a shelf or bracket. The birch polypore (*Piptoporus betulinus*) is colored a beautiful, shimmering, silvery gray, with a whitish underside that browns with age. This species grows exclusively on birch trees, especially dead or dying native paper and yellow birch.

Artist’s conk

Probably the best known of the woody polypores or bracket fungi, the massive artist’s conk (*Ganoderma applanatum*) is the one you often see used as a medium for wood burning art or painting. Mature artist’s conks can grow to about 2 feet wide. Colored various shades of brown above and white to cream below, the artist’s conk is quite beau-



Photo by Rob Zimmer

A violet-edged polypore is one of dozens of polypores you’ll find in most woods.

tiful, often forming layered clusters along the trunks of trees. Where trees grow close together, the fungi may sprawl between multiple trunks. Despite how tempting it might be, do not collect these amazing fungi from the forest. Mature conks may be 50 to 100 years old or more and deserve their place in the wild.

Turkey tail

There are nearly two dozen similar species of bracket fungi that are commonly referred to as turkey tails (*Trametes versicolor*), namely because of the colorful bands that form textured patterns on the fan-shaped

fungi, much like a widespread turkey’s tail. The individual fans are smaller than most other bracket fungi — only an inch or two in diameter — but they are present in huge clusters and tiers and can cover a rotting log or stump.

Rob Zimmer is a nature and garden writer in Appleton, Wisconsin. He is the author of the books “Voices of the Wind: Four Seasons in Wild Wisconsin,” “Reflecting: Nature in Black and White” and “Wild Seasons: The Beauty of Native Wildflowers.” Visit www.facebook.com/RobZimmerOutdoors to learn more.



Not all milkweed is equal for egg-laying monarchs

A new study shows monarch butterflies prefer laying their eggs on milkweed grown in farmland.

A new [University of Guelph study](#) reveals that not all milkweed plants are the same for endangered monarch butterflies looking to lay their eggs.

A team of researchers from Ontario, Canada, has discovered that milkweed plants in farmland have 3½ times more monarch butterfly eggs than milkweed growing in urban gardens, natural areas and roadsides. They also found that monarchs prefer small patches of the plant to larger ones.

"These findings are significant given that there are currently initiatives underway that involve planting milkweed to help the survival of this butterfly," said professor Ryan Norris, who conducted the study with Ph.D. student Grace Pitman, lead author of the study, and Tyler Flockhart. "In some cases, the focus is on roadside planting, which based on these findings is not an ideal location."

The eastern North American population of monarch butterflies has dropped by 95 percent in the last 20 years, putting the insect at risk of extinction. Among efforts to save the species, one strategy is to plant more milkweed.

The two-year study surveyed numbers of eggs found on milkweed in various habitats. The researchers discovered the most eggs on milkweed growing on farmland and the fewest on roadside plants.

"Female monarchs are likely attracted to agricultural lands because it is easier for them to locate the milkweed growing there," said Pitman. In addition, female monarchs likely prefer smaller milkweed patches because they want to avoid male monarchs, she added.

"The males like to hang out in the larger patches and wait for the females. They

tend to harass them, and if the females are looking to lay their eggs, they don't want to be harassed."

Norris said it is unclear whether the butterflies simply avoid urban roadsides or whether their eggs fail because of the harsher environment there. "There are a lot of factors that put the monarchs and their eggs and adult females at risk, including getting hit by cars, road salt and the frequent cutting of vegetation."

He said organizations should rethink investing in milkweed planting projects along roadsides.

"A more effective strategy would be to develop incentive programs with landowners to plant and maintain milkweed within agricultural landscapes."

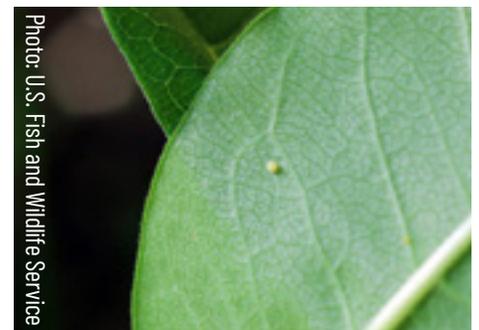
However, other studies — "[Restoring monarch butterfly habitat in the Midwestern US](#)" and "[Productive engagement with agriculture essential to monarch butterfly conservation](#)" — show lower predation in farm fields is likely the reason for higher monarch numbers being produced. Perennial grasslands harbor high populations of monarch predators that are far less abundant in annual croplands. Studies have shown that predation of *Lepidopteran* eggs is significantly higher in perennial grasslands than in corn. Moreover, female monarchs appear to lay up to 3.9 fold more eggs on milkweed in corn compared to milkweed in associated non-crop habitats.

It is unclear if this is a true preference for oviposition on milkweed in corn, or a lack of predation in corn resulting in more eggs observed per unit time. In either case, it is likely that milkweed stems in crop fields may yield more adult monarchs than those

in grasslands. Finding ways to restore milkweed in crop-like habitats may be a particularly productive approach. Agricultural lands are essential to reaching restoration targets because they occupy 77 percent of all potential monarch habitat.

Another [recent report](#) suggests approximately 1.8 billion additional milkweed stems may be needed across North America to return eastern migratory monarchs to a sustainable population size.

A monarch egg on *Asclepias syriaca*; A monarch caterpillar feeds off milkweed.





Dealing with climate change in our landscapes

By Kim Eierman

The impacts of climate change are irrefutable, but it's not just about global warming, shrinking polar ice caps and rising sea levels. Climate change is directly impacting our landscapes and the species around us.

Impact on species

Climate change has already taken a toll on many plant and wildlife species – and it's not about to stop. The [Harvard School of Public Health](#) cautions that “climate change alone is expected to threaten with extinction approximately one quarter or more of all species on land by the year 2050.” Harvard researchers believe that climate change will overtake habitat loss as the greatest threat to life on land.

The [National Audubon Society](#) warns of the dramatic loss to avian species due to climate change, estimating that nearly 50 percent of birds in the U.S. will be imperiled by the end of the century as a result of shrinking and shifting ranges.

Biodiversity

As species are increasingly threatened, biodiversity has never been more important on the planet – and that includes our managed landscapes. Recent research studies have concluded that landscapes with a high degree of plant diversity are more resilient to pests, diseases and the impacts of climate change. In September 2017, the University of Zurich published their [study](#) of 450 landscapes that included 2,200 plant and animal species. Their conclusion:

Ecosystems with high biodiversity are more productive and stable toward annual fluctuations in environmental conditions than those with a low diversity of species. They also adapt better to climate-driven environmental changes.

Co-dependence of plants and wildlife

Plant diversity and wildlife diversity are co-dependent. But, it does matter what you plant. Evolutionary relationships make native plants critically important to many native wildlife species – a fact that has been ignored in the vast majority of American landscapes. There are countless evolutionary relationships that are rarely factored into conventional landscaping.

Sadly, it can take a dramatic event, like the near-extinction of a species, to remind us of these evolutionary connections. The monarch butterfly is one highly visible example. Prior to the last decade, few people knew what a host plant was, much less that a single plant genus could mean life or death for a given wildlife species.

Some lessons for our landscapes in the face of climate change include planting diversely, planting sufficiently (i.e. targets for pollinators et al.) and emphasizing native plants that have evolved with native wildlife.

Phenological mismatches

The erratic fluctuations in temperatures re-



Photo by Chan Mahanta

Many plant species are at risk in the face of climate change. Plants cannot migrate on their own, although the wind may carry seed, such as *Asclepias*.

sulting from climate change can wreak havoc with phenology. Simply put, phenology is the relationship between climate and timing of periodic phenomena, such as plant flowering or bird migration. Plants are cued to flower by a number of factors, including the amount of sunlight, warming temperatures and the amount of precipitation.

A very late onset of spring can be devastating for early emerging bees that rely on early spring flowers for pollen and nectar. The resources that these creatures depend upon may not be there yet. Planting an

abundance and variety of early blooming native plants, including flowering trees and shrubs, may help early pollinators to survive the unexpected weather patterns brought by climate change.

Warm fall seasons with extended stretches of balmy weather can also take their toll on species. A bumblebee queen that is still active on a warm, late October day may find herself with an absence of forage. By planting more late-blooming native plants, extending the blooms through fall, we can help these overwintering creatures go into winter fit and healthy.



Photo by C. Watts, Flickr



Photo by Wild Ones

Top: Due to changing climates, some birds may fail to migrate, like robins and bluebirds, which now frequently overwinter in regions they used to depart in the fall. Eierman says it's important to include more persistent fruits in our landscapes to help these birds make it through the winter.

Bottom: It takes the threat of extinction of a species, such as the monarch butterfly, to help educate people about its host plant, milkweed.

Climate change and birds

Bird migration is also being impacted by climate change. A long run of warm weather in the fall may fool birds into delaying their trip south, at a time when local food resources are dwindling. Landscapers and homeowners can help support many of these birds by planting native trees and shrubs that provide quality nutrition throughout the year.

Birds are opportunistic and will eat what is available. But not all plants are nutritionally equivalent. In fall, the lower quality fruit

of some nonnative invasive plants may not deliver the energy power-packed nutrition of a native fruit, which birds need to make a successful migration.

Some birds may fail to migrate at all, like robins, which now frequently overwinter in regions they used to depart in the fall. We can include more persistent fruits in our landscapes to help these birds make it through the winter. Fruits of native hollies like winterberry and inkberry, rose hips from native roses, and drupes of Northern bayberry, are examples of persistent fruits that hang

on during winter as a food of last resort, when tastier choices are gone.

Leaving flowering perennials and native grasses standing through winter can offer cover, as well as seed sources for birds and other overwintering wildlife. In spring, consider cutting back these plants in stages – not all at once - to benefit creatures such as native bees that may not have yet woken up. Climate change makes the beginning of spring a moving target.

Succession of bloom and plant diversity

Creating a continual succession of bloom has never been more important, given the seasonal confusion with climate change. By evaluating our landscapes to determine when bloom gaps occur, we can then plant additional native species to fill those gaps. For much of the country, this will mean a succession of bloom from early spring through late fall. For others, it may mean year-round flowering.

Not all pollinators are attracted to, or can utilize, the same species of plants. Body size, mouth parts and species determine which pollinators can utilize which plants. A tightly closed flower may be accessible to a strong bumblebee, but a small hover fly will need to nectar from a more open flower. By planting a diverse array of native species, we can support a multitude of species, not just a few.

Plant choices & assisted migration

Many plant species are at risk in the face of climate change. Species can survive in several ways – adaption, acclimation or migration. Plants cannot migrate on their own, although wind or an accommodating bird may carry seed. This reality poses some challenging questions. Do we stop planting species that we think will vanish from our region? Do we assist plants in their migration?

Assisting the migration of plants can be problematic – planting species where they do not naturally occur has some dangers. We have seen the consequences of seemingly harmless introductions before – many of the nonnative invasive plants we now battle were introduced through horticulture.

Some assisted species could become the invasive species of the future. Which ones? That's hard to know. Some nonnative plants have proven themselves to be well behaved outside of their natural range. But, favoring regionally native plants seems to be the best way to support environmental health.

Biodiversity is one of our greatest tools in the face of climate change. The days of tree allées, monoculture hedges and huge swaths of the same perennial, are over. We cannot afford to risk using these old fashioned landscaping practices in our challenged modern landscapes.

“...replacement of invasives with native plants, along with regular monitoring, is today’s paradigm for healthy landscapes.”

Favoring plants that have wide hardiness and heat zone ranges may give us an increased chance of coping with climate change in our landscapes. We can also use more “rain garden” plants where appropriate – those plants that can take occasional inundation as well as periods of drought.

Invasive plants and climate change

Although various native plant species are at a disadvantage with climate change, some research indicates a positive response of invasive plants to increasing CO2 levels. Reducing, or even better, eradicating invasive plants is critical to improving biodiversity.

Unfortunately, invasive plants have a tendency to re-seed prolifically and are often highly deer resistant. Invasive plant management may seem like a thankless task, but it is terribly important to environmental health.

The timing and methods for invasive plant removal are determined by species, and may require a bit of online research. It’s time well spent. But, removal is not enough – replacement of invasives with native plants, along with regular monitoring, is today’s paradigm for healthy landscapes.

The power of trees

A simple step toward fighting climate change is to reduce or remove lawn in favor of planting more trees. The more frequent and severe flooding of climate change results in stormwater runoff that pollutes our water

supply and creates soil erosion. By limiting impermeable surfaces and planting more trees, you can help to keep stormwater on site. A mature tree may store 100 gallons or more of water.

Tree leaves and tree bark intercept raindrops during a storm event, allowing for more gentle infiltration of rainwater into the soil while preventing erosion. Tree roots take up moisture from the soil and store it, also preventing soil erosion while increasing ground water recharge – critical for clean drinking water.

Trees are nature’s air conditioners. As water evaporates from their leaf surface, trees cool the area around them. In a single day, the evaporation from one mature tree can equal the cooling effect of eight room-sized air conditioners.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide and other gasses. In turn, they release oxygen that we can breathe. Trees are oxygen factories that we depend upon for survival. A single tree can provide a day’s worth of oxygen to four people, while absorbing carbon dioxide from the air.

Other considerations

There are many other ways to combat climate change in your landscape. Limit your carbon footprint by skipping the gas-powered mowers, blowers, chippers and others, in favor of hand tools and electric equipment. Be willing to pay a landscaper more to use a broom or a rake.

Compost materials on site that might otherwise go into the waste stream. Keep stormwater on site by replacing impermeable driveways and walkways with permeable alternatives and by creating rain gardens. Brainstorm with your chapter members to come up with solutions that help turn the tide of climate change.

The payoffs

Gardening and landscaping more ecologically in the face of climate change has the happy benefit of connecting us more closely to the environment that we depend upon. We need to be good stewards of our landscapes – now more than ever.

Kim Eierman, an environmental horticulturist specializing in ecological landscapes and native plants, is the founder of EcoBeneficial. She speaks nationwide on a number of ecological topics and teaches at the New York Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, The Native Plant Center and several other institutions.

Below, left: European or common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) leaves out early and retains its leaves late into the fall, creating dense shade that helps it to out-compete many native plants. Invasive plant management may seem like a thankless task, but it is critically important to environmental health. Below, right: Climate change, and the unpredictable weather it brings, presents problems for plants.



Photo by Matt Lavin/Wikimedia



Photo by Kim Eierman



Seeding in winter lets nature do the work

Donna VanBuecken broadcasts native seed in the winter, allowing Mother Nature to work the seeds into the ground and germinate in the spring.

By Donna VanBuecken

This is the time of year to winter seed your prairie. Why would you want to seed a prairie in winter? You seed in winter because it is the easiest way to stratify new native seed in preparation for germination in the spring.

It's pretty simple to do, and it is best to do before the first snowfall. But it can also be done once there is snow on the ground, although it is preferable that the snow covering isn't too deep since it makes it more difficult to physically tramp around and broadcast the seed.

Pick a day to broadcast your native seed just before a snowfall, and hopefully one that's not too windy. Sowing native seeds just before a snowfall covers the seed and allows the winter weather (snow, sleet, freezing rain, etc.) to work it into the ground. The freezing and thawing provided by the weather drills the seed into the ground, and with Mother Nature's help, it moves the seed to the exact depth for proper germination. In the spring, when the soil temperature begins to rise, the seed germinates.

Late November to mid-March is the perfect time to do this. If you do it earlier, it can allow the seed to germinate and the new seedlings to freeze off during the winter. Do it later and there may not be enough freeze-thaw cycles to satisfactorily drill the native

seed down into the earth for proper germination in the spring.

Donna VanBuecken and Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter member Dave Edwards broadcast native seed on the WILD Center property. Grass seeds, such as Indian and porcupine grass, have moisture sensitive bristles called awns that twist or drill the seeds into the soil.

The winter seeding method can be used for a new prairie seeding, as long as the site preparation work has been accomplished ahead of time, or to fill in the spots that didn't fill in with seedlings from the original seeding. The seed can be purchased from a local native plant nursery or can be gathered in the fall from your local Wild Ones chapter seed gathering locations or from their annual seed exchange.

I mix the seed with hamster bedding or sawdust. These materials help to give some bulk to the seed and allow you to see where you've already broadcast.

I like winter seeding because it allows me to mimic nature, and nothing could be surer than that. Seeds drop in the fall and germinate in the spring. That's about as easy as it can get.

So if winter seeding, also known as dormant seeding, is something that appeals to you, don't hesitate any longer. Get yourself outside and sow those prairie seeds. What a great reason to get outside and play!

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. She is a member of Wild Ones of the Fox Valley Area.

Donna VanBuecken and Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter member Dave Edwards mix seed with sawdust to give the seeds some bulk; it also allows you to see where you have already broadcast.



WILD Store will open in January

Wild Ones logo merchandise is ready to go. Soon, you will be able to purchase beautiful hoodies, T-shirts, fleece, a variety of hats, garden banners and an assortment of books and signs.

We did anticipate that the store would be up and running in time for your holiday shopping; however, our volunteer tech team ran into major problems with the store software and our website. The good news is that the problems will be fixed and the store will go live in January.

Thank you for your continued patience as we all eagerly await rollout of the new Wild Ones merchandise.



Wild Ones membership dues and your tax return

This is a good time to remind everyone that your membership dues are tax deductible if you choose to itemize deductions on your tax return for 2017.

Since Wild Ones is a national not-for-profit natural landscaping and educational organization, its donors can deduct their contributions. We are a corporation organized or created in or under the laws of the United States solely for the purpose of educating the public.

Educating and networking with our members is an important way to further our goals. We may publish a local or national newsletter under the following conditions:

- Publication of a newsletter or journal will always be an annual membership benefit;
- The *Journal's* primary purpose is to inform members about the activities and concerns of Wild Ones;
- The *Journal* will not be available to non-members by paid subscription or through newsstand sales;
- The *Journal* will not be printed as a professional journal, which would cause it to be treated as a commercial-quality publication and, therefore, not be tax deductible.

By following this policy, Wild Ones is able to promote its membership dues, which include the *Wild Ones Journal*, as being "fully" tax deductible. "Under IRS guidelines, the estimated value of the benefits received is not substantial; therefore, the full amount of your payment is a deductible contribution." Further, all fees and contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Mark Your Calendar

JANUARY

Jan. 5

National Bird Day

How about planning to add more bird-friendly plants this growing season?

Jan. 10

Save the Eagles Day

The WILD Center is doing its part! The eagles have been spotted almost every day.

Jan. 27

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

8 a.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Oshkosh Convention Center

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

National Seed Swap Day

Visit www.wildones.org/connect/chapters/ for a link to your chapter's website to see if there is a seed swap near you.

FEBRUARY

National Bird Feeding Month

Don't forget to incorporate plants with edible seedpods or berries in your landscaping.

Feb. 17

Minnesota Chapters Design with Nature Conference

University of St. Thomas, St. Paul Campus

St. Paul, Minnesota

March 17

Tennessee Valley's Annual Native Plant Symposium

Plant Natives 2018! What's the Buzz?

Wild Ones online



www.facebook.com/wildonesnative



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pinterest.com/wonational/



www.linkedin.com/company/wild-ones-native-plants-natural-landscapes



Photo courtesy Sylvania Advantage News

Cemetery ravine project increases interest in native plants

From left, Cheryl Rice, superintendent of the Division of Parks and Forestry, Pat O'Brien, Rick Barricklow, Eric Peterson, Candy Sarikonda and Toni Andrews added native plants in a ravine at Ravine Cemetery. Not pictured is Suzanne Nelson. All but O'Brien are Wild Ones Oak Openings Region (Ohio) Chapter members.

By Candy Sarikonda

The one-year anniversary of my father's passing was fast approaching. My thoughts frequently turned to memories of him, and ways that I could preserve those memories. I contemplated how others might be doing the same over thoughts of their loved ones.

I serve as co-chair of the Sylvania (Ohio) Tree Commission. The forestry official approached our commission with an idea for a restoration project. The city owns historic Ravine Cemetery, with its stunning landscape vistas, gorgeous native trees and a beautiful ravine running through the center of the property. The parks and forestry division had stopped mowing the ravine several years ago, allowing the native seedbank to grow. Once again native plants and trees were beginning to flourish in the ravine. He wondered if our commission might take on the task of further restoring the ravine, adding more native plants to the site.

Admittedly, I am a bit uncomfortable in a cemetery. I grew up thinking cemeteries were the stuff of zombie movies. But a fellow Tree

"...we used to have picnics in the cemetery. That once was the place where everybody went to enjoy being outside and being together."

Commissioner said: "You know, we used to have picnics in the cemetery. That once was the place where everybody went to enjoy being outside and being together."

Indeed, in the early 1800s, cities in America were in need of burial grounds. Church grounds had run out of space, and city land was becoming increasingly expensive. A group of horticulturalists in Cambridge, Massachusetts, came up with the idea to create a rural cemetery, and in 1831 designed the first modern cemetery, according to *American Forests*. These early garden cemeteries were

our nation's first parks. They were designed with spectacular vistas, winding roads, wide-open spaces and Victorian gardens. Often, they were the only green space near town, and as towns spread out, these cemeteries slowly became part of the city-center again.

Eventually, the concept of city parks began to slowly replace cemeteries as public gathering green spaces. But now, that concept is once again changing, as a new movement has begun to bring cemeteries back to life.

Ravine Cemetery was established in 1883. The state of Ohio's largest living sassafras tree resides there, having been spared from logging likely due to its location next to the ravine. This gorgeous 300-year-old tree sits on the edge of the ravine, with many of its offspring now growing on the cemetery grounds. The cemetery, and others like it, has some of the best and oldest specimens of various tree species throughout the city, rivalling specimens found on local nature preserves and parks.



Photo by Candy Sarikonda

The ravine was vibrant with fall colors on the day the volunteer group planted. Imagine what it will look like next fall with the addition of the many native plants.

By making the decision to further restore the ravine and its surrounding urban forest, the city would reap many benefits: the native plants would filter runoff entering the stream at the bottom of the ravine; city personnel would no longer have to mow the steep slope; the city would save on mowing costs; the ravine site would serve as habitat for wildlife; and the restored grounds would provide a peaceful and inviting atmosphere for visitors.

The Sylvania Tree Commission team is made up of several members from the [Oak Openings Region \(Ohio\) Chapter](#) of Wild Ones, and we quickly developed a plan for restoring the ravine with Ohio genotype native plants. Tree Commissioners collected native seed the previous fall, grew plugs over the summer, and divided existing plants on our private properties in preparation for a large fall planting in the ravine. We set a planting date of Oct. 28, 2017, and invited additional Wild Ones volunteers to help. We spent that autumn morning installing several hundred native wildflowers throughout the ravine.

Using a 4-inch drill bit made the work much faster, and the seven of us were done in 4 hours. Plant species included common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*), dense blazing star (*Liatris spicata*), great blue lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*), woodland sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*), Ohio spiderwort (*Tradescantia ohioensis*), spotted Joe-Pye weed (*Eutrochium maculatum*), green-headed coneflower (*Rudbeckia laciniata*), blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*), tall ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*), nodding wild onion (*Allium cernuum*) and more. We also removed Canada thistle and other invasive plants. We carried out plans for education and outreach, installing signage and inviting the local newspaper to cover our planting event. We certified the cemetery as Monarch Waystation #18143 through [Monarch Watch](#), thereby demonstrating our city's commitment to monarchs and honoring our city's pledge to create habitat through the National Wildlife Federation's [Mayor's Monarch Pledge](#) program.

As we planted, visitors came by, walking their dogs. The feedback regarding our efforts

was very positive. Visitors expressed excitement over creating butterfly and bird habitat on the cemetery grounds. One visitor asked if we would assist him in creating habitat on his own property, and shared suggestions for other city properties where additional restorations could take place. It was clear this restoration would have benefits far beyond the ravine.

As we finished planting and gathered our equipment, I turned back to admire our work. The ravine was lit up in the sunny reds, yellows and oranges of fall. The warmth of the sun shone on my face.

I closed my eyes, and immediately felt at peace.

Candy Sarikonda is a Monarch Watch conservation specialist and serves on the national "Wild for Monarchs" committee. A member of the Oak Openings Region Chapter of Wild Ones, she enjoys monarch research, habitat restoration, writing and photography, and hopes to use those interests to leave this world a better, healthier place for generations to come. For more information, go to <http://monarchwatch.org/cs/>.

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**Thank you for your
contributions**

Donors to the Annual Appeal will be listed in the
March/April issue of the Journal.



Chapter News

Arrowhead (Minnesota) members learned about “Lesser Known Shrubs of the Northland” at its November program at the Hartley Nature Center.

The **Blue Ridge** (Virginia) Chapter held its annual seed and book swaps at the Virginia Arboretum in November.

Columbus (Ohio) members learned how to identify invasives vs. Ohio native plants during a November presentation by Jennifer Windus, vice president of the Boards for the Ohio Invasive Plants Council. The presentation was held at Shale Hollow Park, a Delaware County preservation park.

Prairie Nursery’s Neil Diboll spoke about “Prairie and Savanna Plants for Pollinator Gardens” at the **Door Peninsula** (Wisconsin) Chapter’s November meeting.

The **Driftless Area** (Wisconsin) Chapter held an event on invasive species identification and removal at the Greens Coulee Nature Preserve, Onalaska, in December.

Members of the **Fox Valley Area** (Wisconsin) Chapter and the Winnebago Audubon Society enjoyed Chuck Hagner’s presentation on “Simple Strategies to Prevent Bird-Window Collisions.” Hagner is a member of the board of directors of the Western Great Lakes Bird and Bat Observatory and former editor-in-chief of “*Bird Watching*” magazine.

Greater Cincinnati (Ohio) members participated in their first members-only holiday event, which was held at a member’s home and included a book exchange.

The **Menomonee River Area** (Wisconsin) Chapter held its annual Seed and Treat Exchange in November. Their focus was on reviewing 2017 programs and discussing which had the greatest impact, and sharing ideas for 2018.

The **Milwaukee North** (Wisconsin) Chapter held its November program at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center. Featured speaker was the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* science writer Paul Hayes, co-author of “Studying Wisconsin: The Life of Increase Lapham, Early Chronicler of Plants, Rocks, Rivers, Mounds and All Things Wisconsin.”

The **Northern Kane County** (Illinois) Chapter’s December meeting included a display of member photos entered in the chapter’s photo contest, ideas for making Christmas décor from native plants, and the adoption of endangered Blanding’s turtles in Illinois.

Gerry Hoekstra explained how to identify and provide habitat for different types of sparrows at the **Northfield Prairie Partners** (Minnesota) Chapter’s November program.

River City – Grand Rapids Area (Michigan) Chapter members wrote letters to city officials, lobbying for better landscaping choices because the government was planning to plant nonnative and invasive trees in a public median.

Sue Leahy, publicity/marketing board member for the **St. Louis** (Missouri) Chapter, expanded the chapter’s tabling presence at various events. Combined with concentrated marketing efforts, the chapter has increased its visibility and membership. After a successful plant sale in May, the chapter partnered with the local Audubon chapter on a native plant home tour. The chapter also held its yearly Landscape Challenge with a Wild Ones member having her front yard redone with a native plant garden. December’s program included their annual potluck and seed exchange. Their 2018 schedule will include a public showing of “Hometown Habitats” at the local zoo and activities to celebrate the chapter’s 20th anniversary.

The **Tennessee Valley** (Tennessee) Chapter held its November annual meeting, which included a seed and plant swap and planning for 2018, at the Chattanooga Audubon Acres. Members also collected canned food and monetary donations for the Chattanooga Area Food Bank at their holiday social. Their book club’s January book is Andrea Wulf’s “*Founding Gardeners: The Revolutionary Generation, Nature and the Shaping of the American Nation*,” which covers how the landscape design concepts of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and James Madison evolved to prefer native plants.

Chapter Anniversaries

2 years	Dayton Area, Ohio
4 years	Prairie Edge, Minn.
7 years	Root River Area, Wis.
8 years	North Oakland, Mich.
20 years	North Park Village, Ill.

Lifetime members

Lisa Beckwith, Greater DuPage

In Memoriam

Douglas D. Salmon, Appleton
Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter

Jean Neal, Oconomowoc
Milwaukee Southwest/Wehr (Wisconsin) Chapter

Dennis Suhr, Rockford
Rock River Valley (Illinois) Chapter

Doris Sutherland, East Lansing
Red Cedar (Michigan) Chapter

Please email Elaine Krizenesky at administration@wildones.org to report the death of a member.

WILD Center Update

By Elaine Krizenesky

There's been lots of activity at the WILD Center. Two groups took on our extensive buckthorn crop, and the difference is amazing.

A group of high school students from St. Mary's Central High School learned about this invasive plant and spent three hours cutting it back while their faculty chaperones and Fox Valley Area (Wisconsin) Chapter volunteers Dave Edwards and Paul Wolters painted the cut ends with Round Up. A few weeks later, a group of volunteers from the Fox Valley Area Chapter, including Dave Edwards, Loris Damerow, Tim McKeag, Roger Kanitz, Paul Wolters, Frank Raith and Barb Cattani, returned to finish the job. The grounds have really opened up without all that pesky buckthorn.

The St. Mary's students also moved a bookcase and the entire Wild Ones library from the basement into the living room. Visitors to the Center can now peruse books about their favorite topics or conduct research on how to plant and care for their natural landscaping.

Our sump pump was old and the motor was starting to burn out, resulting in high water alert alarms – a call no one wants to receive in the middle of the night! We also learned that a crack around our sump pump pit was allowing water to leach into the foundation underneath the Center, causing dangerous erosion and providing a “rodent highway” into the basement. After just a few hours of cement cutting, removal and replacement, we now have a brand new pit and a new sump pump, and the mice are back outside where they belong.

Thanks to Dave Edwards, we now have some new signposts on the grounds to help protect the habitat. New signs warn visitors to avoid walking over the turtle nesting area, and signs at the woodland and ice fishing trails notify people that motorized vehicles such as snowmobiles are not permitted on the trails. These signs were previously purchased but never installed, and we're excited to have the extra reminders to keep the WILD Center grounds safe for plants, pollinators and other wildlife.



Above: Olivia VanSistine, a sophomore at St. Mary Catholic High School, was one of the volunteers to help rid the WILD Center property of buckthorn during St. Mary's service day.

Left: St. Mary's Central High School students learned about buckthorn, and then spent 3 hours cutting it back from the WILD Center property.

Photos by Elaine Krizenesky



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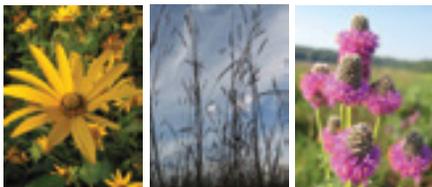
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