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# Wild Ones®

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

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**Inset:** Vehicles pass by native flowers on a Ohio roadway. The state already installed native plantings at the Ross, Darke, Licking and Fairfield county sites, and more are in the works.

**Below:** Ohio's Pollinator District #9 has taken a lead in both planting and promoting native landscaping along roadways. Its first habitat was along State Route 207 near the Ross County fairgrounds.

America received an early holiday present on Dec. 4, 2015. The “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act,” known as the FAST Act, became law. In a moment of unified vision and clarity, the U.S. House of Representatives, Senate and President overwhelmingly agreed to this act that includes a provision conveying credence and support for roadside restoration along the nation’s highways. Many of us have been hoping for a significant government response to

### HABITAT ALONG HIGHWAYS:

### Saving Ohio's Pollinators

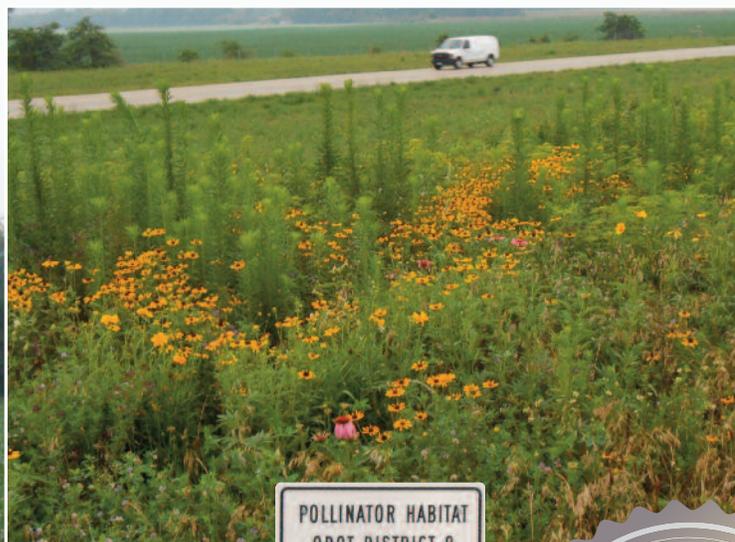
Text and photos by  
Dianne E.  
Kahal-Berman

the alarming pollinator population decline across our country, and America finally has a strategy and we gratefully applaud those who made this happen.

### BACKGROUND ON DECLINING POLLINATORS

With every passing year, many species are being lost; but we are particularly concerned with the population decline of the western honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) because they are the major pollinators for many of the agricultural crops we enjoy.

*continued on page 4*





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**NATIONAL OFFICE WILD CENTER**  
2285 Butte des Morts Beach Road  
Neenah, WI 54956

**Executive Director**  
Gail Gerhardt

P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, WI 54912-1274  
877-FYI-WILD (394-9453)  
920-730-3986  
woresource@newbc.rr.com

**President**

Tim Lewis • 815-874-3468  
president@wildones.org

**Vice President**

Sally Wencel • info@wildones.org

**Secretary**

Karen Syverson  
secretary@wildones.org

**Treasurer**

Steve Windsor • info@wildones.org

**Seeds for Education Coordinator**

Mark Charles • 734-973-0684  
sfedirector@wildones.org

**Website Coordinators**

Design: Jamie Fuerst • wildonesmarketassist@newbc.rr.com  
Site: Peter Chen • wdmgr@wildones.org

**The Meeting Place Coordinator**

Mary Paquette • 920-994-2505  
meeting@wildones.org

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Tim Lewis  
President

## How can you Plant a Seed?

Our marketing theme this year is “Plant a Seed.” There are many ways each of us can Plant a Seed that will help further the mission of the Wild Ones. You could give a few native plants to a friend or neighbor and show him or her how to grow them. You could invite someone to go with you to a chapter meeting. You could share the electronic version of the WILD ONES JOURNAL or invite others to like us on Facebook. Doing any of these is like planting native seeds in your garden. Some germinate and bloom the same year they are planted. Other seeds lie dormant in the fertile ground for a few years and when they eventually germinate, the plants may still not bloom for another few years. But they eventually do bloom and become beautiful additions to our yards and landscapes.

To spread the word and plant seeds, some chapters set up displays at gardening shows and conferences. My chapter participates at four to six events each year. We talk to people, give them literature, a membership brochure and a schedule of our events. We usually do not know whether the people we engage join us.

But some of those people show up at chapter meetings to “check Wild Ones out.” They may attend a few meetings before joining. I imagine that someone invited many of you to a Wild Ones meeting and you eventually joined. Nineteen years ago, two women invited me to attend a Wild Ones meeting. I

went and joined two months later. Have you thought about Planting a Seed forward and inviting someone to a meeting? If you do not know how to explain what Wild Ones is, remember our simple elevator statement: “Wild Ones is a national not-for-profit organization with local chapters that teaches about the many benefits of growing native wildflowers in people’s yards.”

To help chapters Plant a Seed, our national organization provides many resources and services that help chapters be successful. For example, our Facebook page engages visitors, and directs them to the Wild Ones website where they can join and make a donation. Those who join become members of chapters when one is near them. The website provides useful information that also engages visitors.

As you read our executive director’s article, you will learn about the reasons we decided to move from a print to electronic format for the WILD ONES JOURNAL. One of those reasons is because we believe it will make it easier for you to share the publication with someone else. This is an opportunity for you to Plant a Seed with them.

With spring just around the corner, isn’t it time for you to Plant a Seed and share your passion for native plants? You’re not just Planting a Seed; you are furthering our mission to encourage more people to plant a welcoming native habitat for wildlife. 🌸

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



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.



Gail Gerhardt  
Executive Director

## PLANT A SEED 2016

As brown begins to turn to green, and plants begin to sprout, we look forward to another growing season filled with the beauty of renewed life. One watches in amazement as the Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) bloom in Wisconsin, the Scott's sugarbowl (*Clematis scottii*) open in Colorado, the purple Joe-Pye weed (*Eutrochium purpureum*) pushes upward in Connecticut, and the fewflower milkweed (*Asclepias lanceolata*) turns to green in Tennessee. A spectacular sight unfolds before our eyes. Springtime abounds. Renewed energy and excitement fill sunny days. We welcome gentle rain showers that provide water to transport nutrients through plants to help them flourish. And we appreciate the change before us.

With every season  
there comes  
a change...  
electronic journal,  
here we come

As seasons change, so do events, daily occurrences and things we have become accustomed to. The Wild Ones Board of Directors has been talking about going to an electronic journal, or *e-*

*Journal*, for several years, and after in-depth discussions, made the decision to move forward with it this year. They took the initiative to lead Wild Ones forward to the technological era with expectations of gaining members and getting our message out to a broader range of the general population.

By moving to an *e-Journal* format, Wild Ones will follow its mission of being an environmental education and advocacy organization. We will become more environmentally friendly by saving trees and leaving less of a carbon footprint. In other words, we will be practicing what we preach. It is the right thing to do for our environment and the natural beauty that surrounds us.

But there are other reasons to move now to an electronic version of the *Journal*.

First, the timing was right with a new *Journal* editor onboard. An *e-Journal* will also provide an electronic file that can more easily be shared between natural plant enthusiasts, in hopes other like-minded individuals and organizations will join our cause. An *e-Journal* should also allow us to attract a younger audience who can help maintain and promote Wild Ones for years to come.

We're not the first non-profit organization to do this. Other non-profit groups have taken the lead and converted to electronic formats that have been well received. We expect to grow membership by spreading the word about Wild Ones to a much larger audience, thanks to the ability to email across the country and even abroad.

The national office has been charged with making this change happen while still providing the same exceptional quality and professional publication that Wild Ones members are used to receiving. The staff and I, along with our new JOURNAL Editor Barbara A. Schmitz and JOURNAL Designer Deb Muraro, are optimistic and enthusiastic about this move. I encourage all members to give our *e-Journal* a fair try.

The *e-Journal* will be more interactive than the print version. The Meeting Place will instantly connect readers to your chapter website or Facebook page. We will be able to link you directly to articles important to your interests and needs. Eventually, we will be able to include links to informational videos and so much more. This is exciting!

Change is often uncomfortable and our natural inclination is to resist change. My hope is that you will welcome this change and help Wild Ones move forward so we are able to impact younger generations who are leaders in today's advancing technological world. But please be patient with us as we learn this new process and strive to deliver the best possible e-publication to you. By the end of the year, I am confident we will be delivering more features in each issue and that you will enjoy the many benefits of our new electronic publication.

With every season there comes a change. This change is a very positive opportunity to Grow Wild Ones. Help us Plant a Seed and grow Wild Ones together. 🌸

## Thank you

### for contributing to our annual appeal

Once again, our members and chapters have stepped up and given generously to the Annual Appeal.

Your donations will help Wild Ones provide Seeds for Education grants and give us the means to carry out our 2016 Plant a Seed campaign. But your donations will also allow us to create brochures and other informational materials, help with website upgrades, assist in projects and programs to carry out our Strategic Plan, pay for general operating expenses, and most importantly, help us to grow Wild Ones and spread the word about native plants.

Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you! If you haven't yet made a contribution, you have until April 15; your donation is a tax-deductible item.

#### National Staff CONTACT INFORMATION

Please review your contact information for staff and update your records if needed.

**Executive Director** – Gail Gerhardt  
E-mail: [woresource@newbc.rr.com](mailto:woresource@newbc.rr.com)

**Marketing** – Jamie Fuerst  
E-mail: [wildonesmarketassist@newbc.rr.com](mailto:wildonesmarketassist@newbc.rr.com)

**Chapter Communications** – Kim Walbrun  
E-mail: [wildonescommassist@newbc.rr.com](mailto:wildonescommassist@newbc.rr.com)

**Membership** – Jessie Cain  
E-mail: [wildcenterassistant@newbc.rr.com](mailto:wildcenterassistant@newbc.rr.com)

**Toll-free Phone:** (877) 394-9453

**Local Phone:** (920) 730-3986

#### WILD ONES JOURNAL

– Editor –

Barbara A. Schmitz  
[journal@wildones.org](mailto:journal@wildones.org)

(Please indicate topic in subject line.)

– Contributing Editors –

Janet Allen  
Marianne Nowak  
Candy Sarikonda  
Donna VanBuecken

– Design/Layout –

Deb Muraro

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## Saving Ohio's Pollinators *continued from front page*

Prior to World War II, expected hive loss for honey bees averaged 10 percent. But this mortality rate has increased steadily since then. After Ohio's harsh winter in 2014, Barb Bloetscher of the Ohio Department of Agriculture, Apiary Division, said that the state's hive loss varied from 65 percent to total hive collapse. If nothing is done, honey bees, creatures that have survived for millennia, will become extinct within a few decades. Today's bees battle Varroa mites, a parasitic bee predator, and exposure to neonicotinoids, a type of pesticide group related chemically to nicotine that provides long residual activity. But no threat has been as destructive as the disappearance of their habitat worldwide.

Beginning in the mid-20th century, industrial-sized farms, spanning multiple acres and specializing in the production of only one crop, replaced smaller-sized family farms. Clover and alfalfa are no longer conventionally planted as cover crops; instead chemical fertilizers are the norm.

To worsen matters, large, motorized riding lawn mowers were also introduced at the same time. Mowing along highways began to include not only the area from the traveled road to the drainage ditch, but also the area beyond the ditch up to the neighboring fence line.

When this mowed area along the roadway expanded, native species like milkweed, the plant necessary for monarch butterfly survival, began to disappear — and along with the milkweed, the monarch butterfly. According to statistics from the Xerces Society, this species has declined more than 80 percent over the last 21 years.

**Below:** Milkweed is being added back to Ohio's roadsides, providing hope for the disappearing Monarch butterfly that depends on the plant for its existence.



Americans value the look of a manicured lawn and certainly no one can argue that native habitats have a weedy, unkempt look at times. But with the signing of the FAST Act, it has become evident that a large enough number of Americans are *finally* becoming aware that roadside vegetation management is not based exclusively upon beautification preferences. Rather, roadside vegetation management requires thoughtfully integrated responses and that includes a commitment to provide habitat for dwindling pollinator populations that depend on native vegetation for food, medicine and reproduction cycles.

You may be aware of the May 2015 report, *National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators*, produced and issued by the White House Pollinator Health Task Force. A primary goal of the report is “to restore or enhance 7 million acres of land for pollinators over the next five years through federal actions and public/private partnerships.”

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR OHIO?

As early as 2013, the Ohio Department of Transportation - District 9 established the first pollinator habitats along state Route 207 near the Ross County fairgrounds. The following year it added two more sites along U.S. 23 north of Chillicothe, Ohio. The pollinator habitats were the result of efforts by members of the Ohio Certified Public Manager Program responding to pollinator decline with approval from their combined agencies. Melissa Clarke and Lora Weiser of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Melanie Drerup of the Ohio Facilities Construction Committee,

Beverly Hoskinson of the Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, Dianne Kahal-Berman of the Ohio Department of Transportation and Troy Huff, the Ohio DOT team sponsor, comprised the 4Bs Team - Bees, Butterflies, Birds and Beauty.

The 4Bs were very fortunate to make the acquaintance of Denise Ellsworth of the Ohio State Bee Lab and Bonnie Harper-Lore, a noted and experienced educator and authority on roadside restoration. For 20 years, Harper-Lore managed a Federal Highway Administration national vegetation management program serving all 50 state DOTs as a technical resource, policy support, and research grantor. As editor and contributing author of “Roadside Use of Native Plants” and “Roadside Weed Management,” Bonnie provided the expertise that the team lacked. (Click [here](#) for Harper-Lore’s recommended Ohio native seed list and dry mesic mix for the project sites.)

Harper-Lore advised that it is best to begin with native genotype seed, seed already accustomed to a region’s soil and weather conditions. The Ohio Prairie Nursery, a company specializing in locally developed seed, was selected. Seth Rankin of the Deer Creek chapter of Pheasants Forever, provided on-site planting mentorship. Further, the District 9 Ross County garage maintenance employees planted, mowed and committed themselves to the site’s success.

With the approval of former ODOT Assistant Director Mike Flynn, the Pollinator Habitat Pilot Project was adopted as a DOT initiative in the early summer of 2014; other districts were also encouraged to install habitat within their counties.

Independently, many individuals have recognized the value of habitat and the need to respond to habitat loss. While District 9 and members of the OCPM 4Bs were planning and installing their sites, John Kaiser of ODNR had installed a large pollinator site on state right of way in ODOT District 7’s Darke County

a season earlier. Additionally, Scott Lucas of ODOT Central Office had begun the ODOT Sunflower Program, installing sunflowers along routes throughout the state.

Recently, ODOT has joined in partnership with the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative comprised of multiple government agencies and volunteer organizations such as the Ohio DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Pheasants Forever. Lots of projects are currently in the works for 2016!

Ohio DOT’s first priority is the safety of the traveling public. While remaining true to this mission, there are areas where habitat can be acceptable, appropriate, and environmentally beneficial.

### OHIO’S STATEWIDE STRATEGY SEEING RESULTS

The statewide strategy is still in the planning stages with multiple individuals taking leadership responsibilities. But the following are improvements that you may be able to see this spring. In addition to installations of acres of native plantings such as those now at the Ross, Darke, Licking and Fairfield county sites, the Ohio DOT has the Sunflower Program that will include the planting of 30.4 cumulative acres planned to be installed in five of our 12 districts with two more districts joining in the near future. More than half of the state’s districts are now involved! Look for them along your highways.

And although ODOT does not have a firm policy in place to reduce mowing along roadsides, its Highway Management is considering mowing back in areas beyond the roadway ditch line only once in late fall rather than the four times per

A bee gathers pollen from a purple coneflower (*Echinacea*) planted along Ohio’s roadways.



Below: More people are finally realizing that roadside vegetation management is based on more than just beautification preferences.



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season that usually occurs. This would allow beneficial native plants to complete their growth cycle and promote native habitat in addition to reducing mowing costs. All districts have been contacted concerning this new maintenance option, and while some districts intend to wait for local support and proven success of this method, others such as District 9 are taking a lead.

Maintenance of habitat will be challenging in some ways. Weeds that aggressively out-complete native species will be an issue. For instance, marehail (*Hippuris vulgaris*) is very difficult to kill. It is glyphosate-resistant and if left untreated, develops a deep root system. Crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*) is another public enemy. It has been used on Ohio highway slopes for many years because it grows quickly to stabilize the slopes. And even though the flowers are "pretty in pink," crown vetch will destroy just about everything nearby with its seeding habits and underground shoots.

There is a tendency for all of us to be impatient; we want habitats now. But to affect lasting change takes communication, leadership, public support (enough to outnumber public opposition), manpower, public awareness and education, and money. This is going to take time.

But the good news is that habitat is currently being established statewide over a few hundred acres, and every day new sites are being planned for development. Even so, it will take the combined efforts of not only agencies, but also individuals to accomplish restoring habitat to Ohio's share of the nationwide goal of 70 million acres.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO?

While the FAST Act habitat provision is the beginning of a new policy to promote a healthy environment, to further these endeavors show your support. Plant native flowers and plants in your yard. Promote habitat areas where you work or attend school. Let's promise ourselves to become more informed and take a stand for our natural world. Let's do our part together toward supporting the FAST Act provision by "Saving Ohio's Pollinators!" 🌸

**Editor's Note:** Take a moment to contact your representatives at the state and national level and congratulate them on a job well done. Let your government representatives know of your concern about bee and butterfly conservation and your enthusiasm toward these new environmentally responsible actions. And don't forget to make sure your local highway department personnel are aware of these new directives.



**DIANNE E. KAHAL-BERMAN** is a professional civil engineer, roadway project manager and designer for the Ohio Department of Transportation, District 9 located in Chillicothe, Ohio. A graduate of The Ohio State University and more recently the Ohio Certified Management Program, she has been working diligently to promote roadside restoration within ODOT right of way and elsewhere in the state.

**BONNIE HARPER-LORE**, who is quoted in the story, is a past national board member and a past Honorary Director of Wild Ones. One of her books, "Roadside Weed Management," is available in the Wild Store.



## The Wild Ones 2016 Photo Contest

The deadline for the Wild Ones Photo Contest  
is **June 20, 2016**.

We will announce the winners at the  
Wild Ones Annual Conference in August.  
See [wildones.org](http://wildones.org) for details.



Photo by Jim Rogers—Central Wisconsin



Photo by Mary Jo Adam—Illinois Prairie

# NEWS

from across the

# NATION



## HAWAII

HONOLULU — A newly discovered fungus is killing a tree critical to Hawaii's water supply and endangered native birds, and foresters fear that it could kill all the trees statewide.

Called rapid ohia death, the disease has hit hundreds of thousands of ohia lehua trees, primarily in Puna. Scientists estimated that 50 percent of the ohia trees across 6,000 acres of forest were affected in 2014, but the disease is believed to have spread further since then. The state is planning aerial surveys this year to determine how many acres the fungus affects.

Ohia is important to the water supply because it's so effective at soaking water into the ground and replenishing the watershed. It's critical for native birds because the animals feed on its nectar. It also provides a canopy to native plants growing underneath it in the forests.

## MICHIGAN

Mackinac Island may be known for its fudge, but it hopes to someday be known for its help for the struggling monarch butterfly.

Thousands of milkweed seeds have recently been planted at the end of the island's airport runway, in hopes of giving monarch butterflies a place to lay their eggs since milkweed is an important source of food for butterfly larvae.

## NEW JERSEY

A Medford resident has created an interactive website, JerseyYards.org, to educate people about the importance of creating environmentally friendly lawns and gardens and reduce the negative impacts of storm water runoff.

Kevin Sparkman created the free website to help New Jersey residents learn about low-impact landscaping in order to reduce pollution in the area's lakes, streams, rivers and bays, after the state passed one of the toughest fertilizer standard laws in the nation.

The idea for the website came from FloridaYards.org, a website started by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Some houseguests just won't leave. And Philip and Lindy Malin couldn't be happier about that.

They are hosts to a monarch that should have migrated to Mexico long before now but is likely confused by the warmer-than-usual weather, according to the Lancaster Online.

The Malins, who live in East Lampeter, have rescued about 2,300 of the butterflies over the last year as part of a program they call "Malins' Monarchy."

This particular monarch, (right) named Good King Wenceslaus, was delivered

to their home around Christmas by a gardening enthusiast who found the butterfly after it hatched on a plant she had moved to her garage. Until he is released in the spring, Wenceslaus will dine on cotton swabs of Gatorade and fruit salad and live in a screened enclosure.

## WISCONSIN

After being raised six months in an area wildlife center, two young bald eagles are on their own, released Jan. 4 on Little Lake Butte des Morts, which is adjacent to the WILD Center, the national headquarters of the Wild Ones.

The birds, from two different nests, spent six months at The Feather Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center near New London where another adult eagle taught them how to behave. They were released out of Fritse Park in the town of Menasha and headed straight to the lake. See photos of their release on Fox 11 online.



**Good King Wenceslaus is a confused monarch who hatched in December in Pennsylvania. Philip and Lindy Malin took the butterfly in and are feeding it Gatorade and fruit salad until he can be released in spring.**

PHOTO: Lancaster Online



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Allison Watson, education programs manager, records count data.

Text and photos by Candy Sarikonda

The fall monarch butterfly migration is a spectacular phenomenon. Since monarchs cannot survive freezing cold temperatures in the north, they must migrate to more suitable habitat to spend the winter. Most monarchs east of the Rocky Mountains migrate to overwintering sanctuaries in central Mexico. However, the majority of monarchs west of the Rockies choose to migrate to one of more than 200 different overwintering sites along the California coastline. Thousands of western monarchs spend the winter at these sites along the coast, usually arriving in October and staying until mid-February. Monarch scientists, enthusiasts and volunteers have observed these sites for years, and trained volunteers conduct monarch counts at numerous sites annually during a three-week period around Thanksgiving. Some overwintering sites are monitored more frequently throughout the winter, and I was given the opportunity to participate in the bi-weekly monarch population count at the Pacific Grove Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary in Pacific Grove, Calif.

The PGMBS has long been a preferred site of overwintering monarchs. Western monarch population counts have been conducted and documented annually at PGMBS and other California sites since 1997, via an effort coordinated by the Xerces Society. The population counts are invaluable for understanding the

# Monarch migration count:



## 'AN awe-inspiring EXPERIENCE'

overall western monarch population, and providing researchers with a picture of the status of the population and its conservation needs. Bi-weekly overwintering population counts are done at PGMBS, allowing researchers to note fluctuations in the grove's population over the season. In addition, the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History tagged butterflies at the sanctuary in 2014, enabling researchers to track monarch movements within and between overwintering sites. Parasitism studies were also conducted, allowing researchers to determine the prevalence of the OE (*Ophryocystis elektroscirrha*) parasite in monarchs at the site. The tagging and parasitism data were shared with researchers at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's Monarch Alert program and the University of Georgia's Monarch Health lab to further understand western monarchs' overwintering behavior and parasite prevalence. A great deal of valuable information about western monarchs has been gleaned from the efforts of volunteers and scientists at the PGMBS site, and I was honored to have the opportunity to participate in the PGMBS monarch count.

I joined Allison Watson, education programs manager for the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History, to conduct a count of the monarch butterflies spending the winter at PGMBS. The grove is a forest of native Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) and Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*), as well as non-native eucalyptus trees. In the



winter, monarchs gather together in groups, or clusters, to roost in the tree branches during the cold nights. This season overwintering monarchs arrived at PGMBS in early October and quickly increased in number. By Thanksgiving, monarchs at the grove numbered 11,533.

Watson and I met in the grove at sunrise on Dec. 30, 2015. Early morning is the best time to observe inactive, roosting monarchs. That morning it was 42° F with clear skies and calm winds, and we found the monarchs roosting primarily in a single Monterey cypress tree overhanging the driveway near the grove entrance. She explained that when monarchs first arrive at the beginning of the overwintering season, they typically cluster in the line of eucalyptus trees near the grove entrance. But when air temperatures begin to decrease as the overwintering season progresses, the monarchs move to trees near the center of the grove where there is more protection from wind and inclement weather. Each tree has a small identification tag placed

**Allison uses binoculars to count the number of monarchs at the Pacific Grove Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary.**



on it, allowing volunteers to document exactly what trees the monarchs are using.

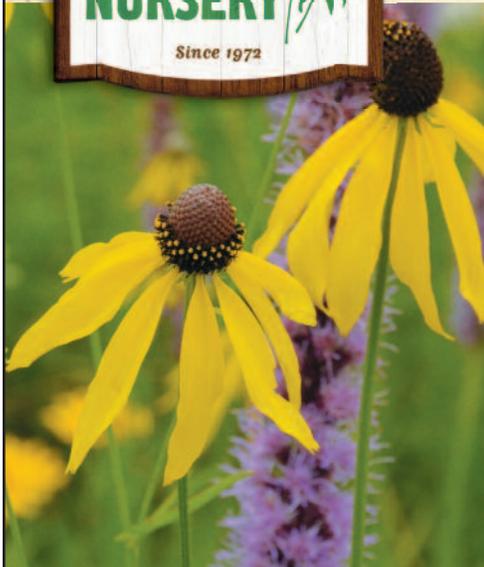
Watson said that the grove is experiencing some decline. “Drought and disease are affecting some of the trees,” she said. “We lost two trees to pitch canker this year.” However, by collecting data on the monarchs' tree usage along with concurrent temperature, wind and weather conditions, they can determine how best to restore the grove to meet the needs of the overwintering monarchs. *continued*





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### Watch Them Grow

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Castle Oak, Neenah	Commerce Pond, Neenah
South Native Trails, Neenah	Sullivan Pond, Fond du Lac
Pendelton 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 BB, Appleton	

### Solutions for the Natural Landscaper

#### Design and Installation

- Natural landscaping using native plants – prairie, shade, and wetland environments
- Raingardens
- Retaining walls – natural and block (green and plantable)
- Patios – flagstone & flat rock and permeable, porous and water-retaining pavers

#### 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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We observed each tree that hosted roosting monarchs. Cold air temperatures led the monarchs to gather in tight groups, giving the appearance of clusters of dead leaves hanging from the tree branches. Watson examined the clusters with her binoculars, counting the monarchs on each tree branch. While eastern monarch population counts are done by calculating the area of forests occupied by monarchs, the western population is small enough that monarchs can be counted individually. Some tree branches contained a handful of monarchs, so each individual monarch was counted. Other branches contained hundreds of monarchs, and Watson used a method of estimation to count them. She explained: “I begin at the tip of the branch, and count 10 monarchs grouped together in the cluster. Based on the amount of space those 10 monarchs occupy on the branch, I then count by groups of 10 up the branch until I count all of the monarchs on the branch.” One cypress branch, hanging almost straight down due to the weight of the butterflies, held 1,000 monarchs!

As we moved further into the center of the grove, Watson noted a very tall pine tree that held a few small clusters. “I don’t normally see monarchs way up there, so this has been interesting to see,” she said. She also pointed to a small number of deceased monarchs on the forest floor that were missing their abdomens. While mice do prey on monarchs on the ground, volunteers have witnessed a squirrel removing monarchs from the clusters. Reports indicate that the squirrel approaches a cluster, removes a few monarchs, and then returns to a protected spot near the forest floor where it consumes the monarch abdomens. “We were really surprised to see this,” she said. “We think it is only one squirrel doing it, but it is really unusual.”

As we walked in the cold morning air — hands chilled while holding binoculars, clipboard and camera — I noticed the strain on my neck. All that looking up in the trees for long periods was not easy! Watson laughed and said: “Yes, it is a bit of a strain. I definitely feel it in my shoulders, but I am getting used to it. I might treat myself to a shoulder massage at the end of the season.” I nodded in absolute agreement. After an hour of counting, the count was complete — 10,236 monarchs at the grove!

**Cold air temperatures lead monarchs to cluster in tight groups, giving the appearance of clusters of dead leaves hanging from the tree branches.**

We discussed the results of the count. Monarchs numbered 24,000 at PGMBS during the previous overwintering season, indicating this season’s count was a drop from last season. But notably, results from the Thanksgiving Western Monarch Count show a slight increase from last season in the overall western monarch population with volunteers counting 271,924 monarchs in 187 sites. Although more monarchs were counted, the average number of monarchs per site is similar to last year’s count, and this year’s population estimate represents a 39 percent decline from the long-term average.

However, there are positive indications from this year’s count results. Fifteen sites that have been continuously monitored had the highest numbers of butterflies in a decade. Several sites that had not seen monarchs for years were occupied, and there were a number of sites, such as the Berkeley Aquatic Park, that hosted overwintering monarchs for the first time. In Marin County in the northern extent of the overwintering range, 11 sites had increased numbers and two new sites each supported more than 8,000 butterflies.

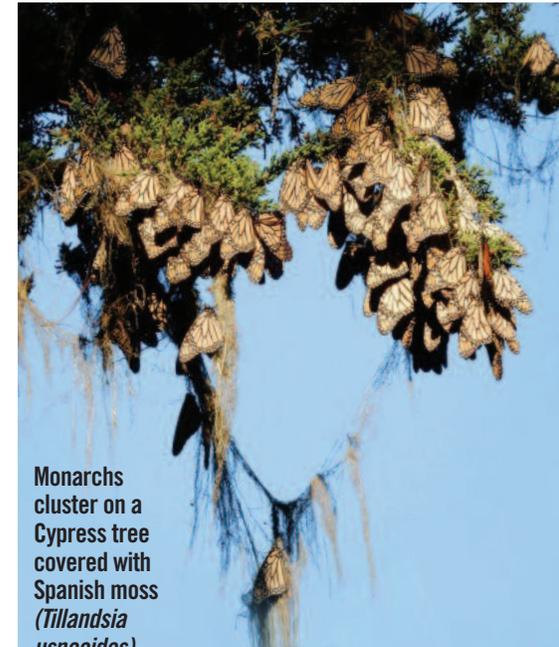
Less positive is that the majority of the sites surveyed in southern California had fewer monarchs than last year.

My visits to PGMBS are always an awe-inspiring experience. But having the opportunity to participate in a monarch count was a unique learning opportunity that I will treasure for years. If you are interested in participating in a monarch count at a site near you, consider contacting the Xerces Society. Training with experienced counters is recommended for new citizen scientists. Volunteers are especially needed to commit to assessing a site year after year. Learn more [here](#) and then get started today! 🌸

*CANDY SARIKONDA is a Monarch Watch conservation specialist and serves on the national “Wild for Monarchs” committee. A member of the Oak Openings, Ohio 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/>.*



Male and female monarch bask in the sunlight at the Pacific Grove Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary.



Monarchs cluster on a Cypress tree covered with Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*).



## SFE grant recipients named for 2016

Wild Ones received 40 applications for Seeds for Education grants this year. Thank you to all of the groups who participated. Congratulations to the recipients of the 2016 Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program. Recipients include:

- **Saints Peter and Paul Elementary School**  
The Inspiration Garden  
Nauvoo, Ill.
- **Trivium Preparatory Academy**  
Trivium Pollinator Garden  
Goodyear, Ariz.
- **National Teachers Academy**  
Native Plant Pollinator Garden  
Chicago, Ill.
- **Egg Harbor City Community School**  
Egg Harbor City Community School Wetlands Garden  
Egg Harbor City, N.J.

- **Roosevelt High School**  
Bee-Haven Pollinator Habitat  
Minneapolis, Minn.
- **Friends of the Ansonia Nature Center**  
ANRC Bioswale Planting Project  
Ansonia, Conn.
- **Allegan High School**  
Allegan High School Native Plant Demonstration Garden  
Allegan, Mich.

Once the projects are registered as a Monarch Waystation, Monarch Watch will once again be offering additional funding to these winners.

If you reside in the area of any of these grant winners, please don't hesitate to lend a hand to help them successfully establish and maintain their planned outdoor learning projects. This is one more way Wild Ones is helping to Plant a Seed.

## Thank you to SFE committee, judges

Wild Ones would like to thank the Seeds for Education judges and SFE Coordinator Mark Charles, as well as Denise Gehring and Julia Gehring, who compiled accurate, complete application information and organized it to disperse to the judges in the SFE grant program.

Judges were recruited from around the country to rank the 40 SFE applications. They took time over the busy holiday season to review the applications and then rank them according to Wild Ones SFE criteria. The 2016 SFE Judges included:

**Rob Krain** of Toledo, Ohio – Oak Openings Region

**Tracey Koenig** of Menasha, Wis. – Fox Valley Chapter

**Wanda DeWard** of Walland, Tenn. – Tennessee Valley Chapter

**Patrick Reed** of Ann Arbor, Mich. – Ann Arbor Chapter

**Mike Brondino** of Bayside, Wis. – Milwaukee North Chapter

**Michael J. LeValley** of Mt. Pleasant, Mich. – Mid Mitten Chapter

**Denise Gehring** of Toledo, Ohio – Oak Openings Region

**Barbara Velez Barbosa** of Columbus, Ohio – Columbus Chapter

**Jan Hunter** of Bowling Green, Ohio – Oak Openings Region

**Marissa Grant** of Mattoon, Ill. – Illinois Prairie Chapter

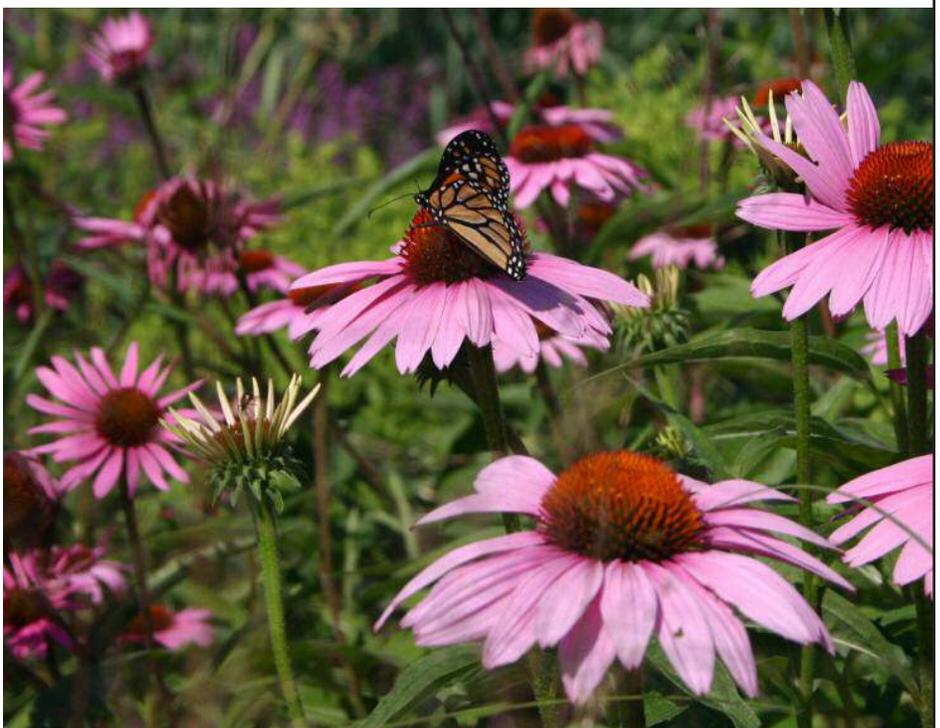
**Cynthia Nelson** of DeKalb, Ill. – Rock River Valley Chapter

**Candice Meyer** of Appleton, Wis. – Fox Valley Chapter

Thank you all for being involved in a very worthwhile and educational program.



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# Should I give in and finally

Join

**Y**ou should join Facebook.” You probably hear this all the time from everyone — your kids, grandkids, other family and friends. You probably also hear it from businesses and organizations that you support. “Like us on Facebook” is a prevailing statement all over the business world.

If you do decide to join, you can see what is happening with people you know and love, maybe find some old friends you have not seen in a long time, and probably see a lot of pictures of people’s dogs and their favorite foods. But you will also be able to connect with Wild Ones national, Wild Ones chapters and other Wild Ones members. You will be able to see upcoming events and happenings like conferences, plant sales or yard tours. You will see pictures of native gardens from other areas of the country. You can post your own pictures and tell your garden’s story. You will be able to help others who have questions and need assistance.

You do not need to tell the whole world all your personal information. To open a Facebook account, the only information you need to enter is your name, email and birthdate. Facebook may ask more questions, but you do not need to answer everything. Just click “next” or “skip” and you will move through the process. You can always fill in more information later if you decide to complete your profile.

Once your page is up, you can then “find friends.” Just type “Wild Ones” in the find friend field and see what pops up. You will see the [national Facebook page](#), chapter pages and the new [Wild Ones Group](#), along with other non-native plant pages.

There are three different types of pages in Facebook:

- **Personal Pages:** Once you find a friend, you need to “add Friend.”
- **Business/Organization Pages:** Once you find a business page you want to follow, you need to “Like” those pages.
- **Facebook Groups:** These pages are for members of the group only. You will ask to “join” these groups.

Check out the Meeting Place on page 24 to see direct links for Wild Ones chapter Facebook pages. 🌸



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# Preparation for a SUCCESSFUL

By *Becky Erickson*

**L**et's plant a garden! Sounds simple, right? Just stick a plant in the ground and watch it grow. Yah, right. Those of you who know the results are chuckling.

Most of us have painted a house or at least a room. (Yes, I am still on subject; please follow the analogy.) Preparation time for moving stuff, scraping, taping, getting the right paint color, and tools can take a full day, week or month depending on the size of the project. Remember the paint job you did when you weren't completely prepared? Disastrous – right? That's why you can't hurry planting a garden either. But hopefully, the following instructions will help you install a successful garden.

I strongly suggest starting a new garden during late summer and autumn before the next spring when native perennials are in growth mode. Just like applying paint to a wall, it is essential to have a clean, bare, soil surface before plants are installed. This is the part that takes time.

### Do not till or dig up your garden space for three reasons:

1. Native plant roots do not grow through air pockets and they grow weakly in fluffy soil.
2. Tilling just brings up all the weed seeds that have been buried in the soil. Do you want to pull lots of weeds? Just leave them there.
3. Every time you break the soil, carbon stored there is oxidized, creating carbon dioxide. This is something we are trying to cut down on.

So how do you remove unwanted vegetation? There are three ways:

1. **Glyphosate:** I hear the screams of horror – calm down. No one is going to eat any of these plants. Glyphosate has a very short half-life – about 2 weeks. So it will be gone before spring. It only works when it contacts plant leaves. It does not react with roots. I advocate minimal, careful and judicious use of whatever chemical is best for the job. Ready-to-use glyphosate is 1.5 percent and it is very expensive. Get the 41 percent generic concentrate and mix 1/3 cup per gallon of water. Only use it on a calm day, and only pump your sprayer enough to get some low pressure. Spray an inch or two from the vegetation. Let the area rest for two weeks and spray again. If you see another green-up, spray again. This will give you a full kill of all germinated vegetation.
2. **Hard cover:** This could be a piece of drywall, plywood or weighted cardboard. This has moderately good results if temperatures are warm, there is regular rainfall and the gardener is persistent. Lay the cover down for a week; remove it for a week. Repeat until you see no more seed germination. This process can take two to three months. If your chosen area is large, these covers will be costly unless you know someone who has scraps to throw away.
3. **Sod cutter:** This is a very sharp tool that cuts away all vegetation from the surface. You have to get it under the grass and jab, jab, jab horizontally.

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## WOOD CHIPS make the BEST MULCH

There is a biological reason for using wood chips as mulch. Weeds have very shallow roots. Weeds need lots of nitrogen right on the surface to germinate and flourish. There are bacteria in the soil that combine sugar [carbon compounds], nitrogen and oxygen to thrive. Dead wood is a slow-release sugar source for the bacteria. When there is enough sugar available for the bacteria, all the surface nitrogen is used, and none is left for weeds to feed from.

Native plants do not grow well where there is a lot of nitrogen. However, dead wood is a bit better than shredded leaves because it allows rain and oxygen into the soil, whereas shredded leaves can mat, acting like a sponge drawing moisture from the ground, additionally suffocating life in the soil. Leaves mixed with wood chips are fine.

All this mulch eventually rots and builds soil. The second year, your new garden is pretty well established and the original mulch layer has mostly decomposed. About a month before emergence, cut all the dead sticks off and broadcast another one to two inches of new mulch. The native perennials will push through it, and weeds will be scarce.

Happy gardening!

# GARDEN

**Above: Covering your garden space with cardboard and woodchips and then allowing it to settle will make planting much easier.**

PHOTO: Becky Erickson

If you have heavy clay soil and old healthy sod, it will be impossible to use one manually. Check at a machine rental store to see if they have a mechanical sod cutter. This is not cheap and not easy. You also need a place to use or dispose of the sod. Remember, when you remove the top three to four inches of dirt you are removing whatever meager detritus and mycorrhiza are in your soil.

When you think you have a good kill on the area for your new garden, cover the whole area with cardboard and woodchip mulch. Go to the dumpster behind a furniture store and salvage mattress and table boxes. Bagged mulch is awfully expensive. Most cities and towns have free mulch sites; some even have a loader there on Saturdays to fill your pickup. If you have a place to store a big pile, ask a tree service to dump their chip trailer at your house. You can do this the autumn before or the week before you plant. But allowing the cardboard and woodchips time to settle makes planting much easier than doing it all the same day.

Finally, it is time to plant! The average space a new plant needs is about two to three square feet, which is 12" to 18" apart. Think about the mature size of each plant and the root structure. Are the roots spreading, dendritic, deep tap or some combination? Set your potted



**Next, rake and even out your garden's surface.**

PHOTO: Becky Erickson



**To help plan your garden, first move the plants where you would like to place them, as workers did in this traffic circle in Fulton, Mo. last spring. For residential applications, the average space a new plant needs is about two to three square feet.**

PHOTO: Ann Wakeman



For the actual planting, sit on your knees; scrape mulch back from the cardboard about a foot in diameter; and then use your trowel to cut a T in the cardboard.



After using a trowel to cut a T in the cardboard, fold back the two flaps and then dig a hole that is close to the size of the pot you will be planting.



Place the root ball firmly to one side of the hole and crumble dirt waiting in the nursery flat back in the hole to fill the other edges. Then press this loose dirt in firmly.

PHOTOS: Becky Erickson

plants out all over the garden space in an irregular pattern. Some big plants will need 3 feet around for elbow room; some are vertical so they will need support from closer neighbors.

Now go get a sturdy trowel, a plastic or cardboard nursery flat and kneepads. Start at one side and work to the opposite side; never go from the outside edge to the middle.

For the actual planting, sit on your knees; scrape mulch back from the cardboard about a foot in diameter.

Use your trowel to cut a T in the cardboard; fold back the two flaps.



Dig a hole that is close to the size of the pot you will be planting. Put this dirt in the nursery flat. This dirt has weed seeds in it; you don't want it on top of the cardboard where it will germinate – do you?

Check the depth of the hole by putting the pot in it. It is better to plant natives an inch too high than an inch too deep. Most natives need to let the crown breathe, although there are several exceptions. If the hole is too deep, put some loose dirt in the bottom and push it down until the pot fits.

To get the plant out of the pot, put your fingers flat on the top of the pot with leaves sticking out between your fingers; turn it upside-down; shake hard and bump the edge on your hand. If it is stuck, use a table knife along the inside of the plastic to free the seal. With the plant out of the pot, leafy side up, place the root ball firmly to one side of the hole; crumble dirt waiting in the nursery flat back in the hole to fill the other edges. Press this loose dirt in firmly. That little bit of garden dirt that is left needs to be placed over the top of the potting medium. Garden soil will form a cap over the potting medium to protect it from drying out.

Water thoroughly! Don't rely on any weather predictions, not even that dark cloud on the horizon. Pour water until the hole is full and some air bubbles come up; then push in from the outside, even push with your foot, so the roots have firm soil contact. Bring the cardboard flaps back in place without covering the crown. Replace mulch

without covering the crown. Water again.

Spring is really the best time to plant native perennials because they are in growth mode and, hopefully, rain comes at regular intervals to keep all soil on the moist side, not just the hole your little plant was put in. If you are faced with the misfortune of the sky running dry, here are some tips to keep your new plants alive:

1. Slowly soak the soil where you will be planting. Use a soaker hose or a small sprinkler and only water in the evening. Then cover the area with something impermeable during the day to stop evaporation. When you can dig a hole and still find moist soil, you can start planting.
2. Dig the hole about twice as wide and deep as the size of the container. Amend the soil (clay) from the hole with some kind of *decomposed* biological stuff (decomposed compost, manure or leaves), but nothing with a high nitrogen content. This necessitates breaking clay into small chunks and mixing with compost. *Do not* use a peat-based potting soil mix to amend the planting site because it will dry very fast.
3. Fill the hole with water and let it soak in.
4. Soak the potted plant before planting. Plant and water as explained previously.
5. Before successive watering of your new plants, stick a finger through the mulch to test for dampness. If clay comes out on the tip of your finger, the plant probably is OK. Soak plant if finger comes out clean, and water thoroughly if plant is droopy. 🌸

**Editor's note:** See the January and March 2015 issues of the WILD ONES JOURNAL for related stories on germinating and potting your wildflower seedlings.



**BECKY ERICKSON** holds a bachelor's degree in design and a master's in biology; she has worked for several state and federal agencies doing biological field surveys, and was the state coordinator eight years for MO Native Ecotype Program, now ended. Now retired, she keeps a native nursery for Mid-MO Wild Ones and edits the MO Native Plant Society newsletter.

Mountain mint provides beauty and fragrance even during winter, much like wild bergamot and other native mints.

Text and photos by Rob Zimmer,  
Fox Valley Area Chapter

Even as winter comes to an end, native wildflowers put on a spectacular show in the Midwest and Northeast. Painted in shades of brown, olive, bronze, silver and gold, the plants provide interest and unexpected beauty all season long.

In addition to the ornamental beauty they offer during the winter, most native wildflowers also continue to provide valuable food for winter songbirds that travel from garden to garden and prairie to prairie. You're sure to see goldfinches, chickadees, American tree sparrows, juncos, wild turkey and others feasting on the rich seeds these native treasures provide. The textures, vertical interest and beauty native wildflowers provide in the snow is even more breathtaking. In fact, many natives feature clusters of blooms that dry in autumn and look breathtaking when tufted in fresh-fallen snow.

### WINTER TEXTURES

My favorite of the native wildflowers in winter are those that provide stunning textures in the garden. Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), with its large, spiny seed heads, really stands out against the white backdrop of snow. Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), with clusters of short, tube-shaped blossoms, not only provides beautiful texture, but also a strong fragrance, even during the winter. The incredible flower heads of rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) are also examples of exceptional texture all year round. Even the leaves of this plant, which resemble those of an aloe vera plant, may remain partially green all winter long.

Prairie coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), goldenrod (*Solidago*), asters (*Asteraceae*), ironweed (*Vernonia fasciculata*) and others also provide beautiful texture with their fluffy seed heads and subtle coloration. In addition, the unusual seed pods of the many milkweed species still open to the winter winds to disperse their fluffy seeds gleam in metallic silver and gold on sunny winter days.

## Native wildflowers provide

# COLOR, TEXTURE

## throughout winter

### ELEGANT GRASSES

Many native grasses provide an excellent example of texture, as well as color and vertical interest during the winter months.

Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), now painted in beautiful reddish orange with silvery tufts up and down its 2 to 3 foot stems, is one of my favorites. Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*), with its spectacular fireworks display in brilliant gold, is another.

Switch grass (*Panicum virgatum*) retains its fall brilliance well into winter with its outstanding golden color and huge, airy seed plumes dancing over the winter garden.

In order to enjoy the unexpected beauty of native wildflowers and grasses in winter, all it takes is resisting the urge to chop them back during autumn. Many gardeners, unfortunately, routinely prune back all of their native wildflowers and perennials during the fall garden cleanup season, meaning they are never able to fully enjoy the beauty, color and texture these amazing plants provide all season long. ❀



The unusual seed pods of the many milkweed species provide beauty to a winter landscape.

**Inset photo:** The unusual, spiny seed heads of native purple coneflower provide beauty, texture, as well as food for songbirds, all winter long.

**ROB ZIMMER** is a nature and garden writer in Appleton, Wis. 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," all available on Amazon. For more information, visit [www.robzimmeroutdoors.com](http://www.robzimmeroutdoors.com) or [www.facebook.com/RobZimmerOutdoors](https://www.facebook.com/RobZimmerOutdoors).

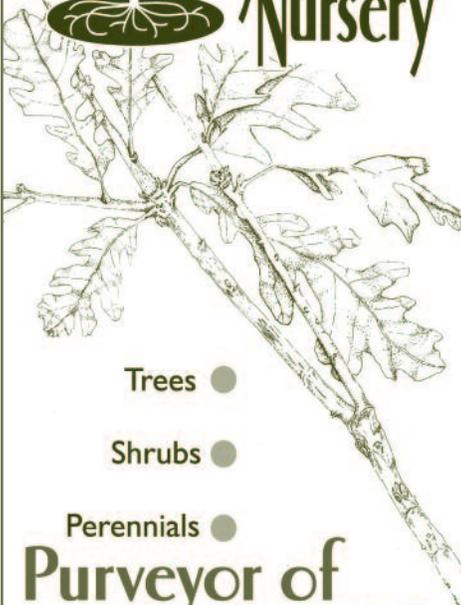
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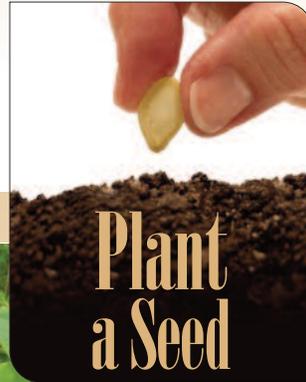
## Plant a Seed MARCH

It's time to start planning your native garden or a butterfly garden. If you already have one, help someone else plant his or her garden. Follow this [link](#) for help in planning your garden. Click [here](#) to help you decide what location is best for your native garden. And lastly, this [link](#) will help you determine what shape to make your garden and what soil is best. Spring is coming fast, so do your planning ahead of time.

## Plant a Seed APRIL

Many Wild Ones chapters hold an annual native plant sale. Please check out your chapter website for more information on upcoming plant sales. It is also a good time to become aware of the native nurseries and landscapers in your area. Go to the Wild Ones website under the Resources tab, or reference the Yellow Pages in this JOURNAL to locate a native nursery or

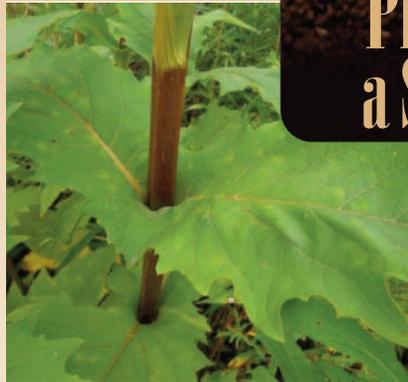
landscaper in your part of the country. Pass this information on to a friend, co-worker or relative and Plant a Seed.



## Plant a Seed

By Jamie Fuerst

I got the buzz for natives after I started working at the Wild Ones National



Cup plants can grow 4-10-feet tall, and get their name from the fact that their leaves form a "cup" at the stem where rain water can gather.

Office. Working closely with Donna VanBuecken taught me about the benefits of natives and working at the WILD Center taught me about specific plants, but my husband was not on board yet. When I talked about replacing our landscaping, he didn't want to do the work until one day when we attended an event at the WILD Center.

It was late summer and we stood on the deck as we watched butterflies fly around the garden and goldfinches play and drink water from the leaves of cup plants (*Silphium perfoliatum*). When we left for dinner, he said, "We need to plant some cup plants."



A cup plant towers over an adult, showing just how tall the plants can grow.

PHOTO: Jim Baxter

Although cup plants did not fit in the little area that we were redesigning, we put in some plants to attract hummingbirds. We are now able to look out the kitchen window and watch our hummingbirds most of the summer.

We are now replacing small sections of our landscaping each summer. Slowly, but surely, we will get rid of all the non-natives now that my husband is on board. All thanks to a visit to the WILD Center one summer day.

How have you ever planted a seed with someone? Share your story with us so we can share with others. Email us at [Journal@wildones.org](mailto:Journal@wildones.org). 🌱

# Where have the Wild Bees Gone?

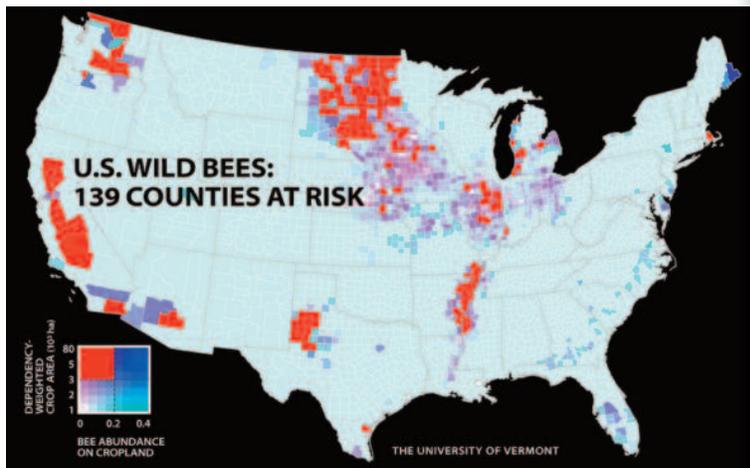
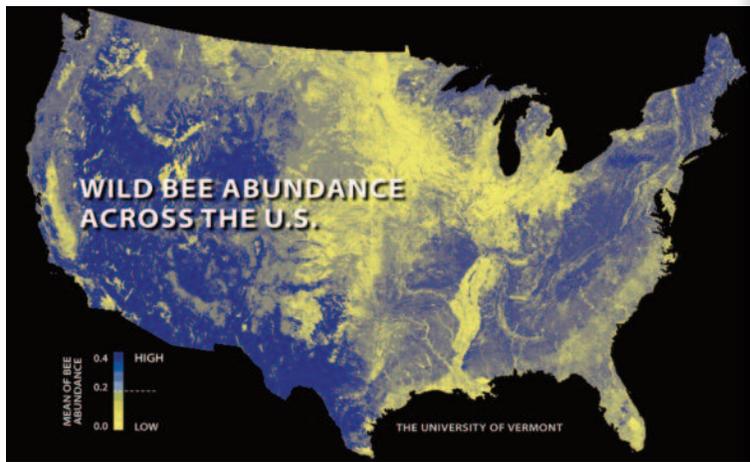
By Barbara A. Schmitz,  
JOURNAL Editor

The first-ever study of wild bees shows that their numbers are declining, especially in key agricultural areas, and their decline could have a disastrous impact on the nation's crops.

"There certainly is plenty of food that doesn't rely on bees, such as corn," says Eric Lonsdorf, a research associate in biology at Franklin & Marshall College and one of seven researchers behind the study. "But it would certainly be a less nutritious landscape if we don't have bees, and food will get more expensive, too."

The study identified 139 counties in key agricultural regions of California, the Pacific Northwest, the upper Midwest and Great Plains, west Texas and the southern Mississippi River valley where low bee numbers correspond to large areas of pollinator-dependent crops. Those areas of mismatch comprise 39 percent of the pollinator-dependent crop area in the U.S., found the researchers, who created the new maps by first identifying 45 land-use types from two federal databases. They then gathered input from 14 experts on bee ecology about each type of land, and how suitable it was for providing wild bees with nesting and food resources.

Averaging the experts' input and levels of certainty, the scientists built a bee habitat model that predicts the relative abundance of wild bees for every area of the contiguous United States, based on their quality for nesting and feeding from flowers. Finally, the team checked and validated their model against bee collections and field observations.



According to the study, published in December 2015 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, specialty crops, such as pumpkins, blueberries, peaches, apples and watermelons, are among the crops that present the strongest mismatch between changes in supply and demand. In other words, pollination supply and demand are mismatched for those crops that most require pollination.

Their research into wild bees is occurring because honeybees are threatened. "We don't know what to do if the honeybee goes away," Lonsdorf said. "That's why we are doing this work; we need some backups."

The research team estimated that the number of wild bees declined 23 percent between 2008 and 2013 in the lower 48 states. The decline was generally associated with conversion of natural habitats to row crops.

*continued*

## FOR MORE INFO

### White House National Strategy to Promote Pollinator Health —

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/05/19/announcing-new-steps-promote-pollinator-health>

**Policy Brief:**  
*New Analysis of Wild Bee Abundance Highlights Areas of Concerns* —  
<http://icbbees.org/national-analysis-of-wild-bee-abundance-highlights-areas-of-concern/>

**Tools for Growers** —  
<http://icbbees.org/tools-for-growers/>

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Eleven states (Illinois, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin) collectively accounted for 60 percent of the areas of predicted decrease in wild bees. Over 5 years in these states, corn and grain croplands increased 200 percent and 100 percent respectively, mostly replacing grasslands and pasture.

However, researchers found that bee abundance increased in 10 percent of the U.S. where grasslands, pastures, and corn and soy fields were converted to higher-quality habitat. They created bee maps that show what areas are suffering the biggest declines of wild bees, as well as identifying those areas with low bee supply and high bee demand, that are the top priority for conservation.

Along with managed honeybees, wild bees are valuable pollinators. According to the study, bees contributed to an estimated 11 percent of the nation's agricultural gross domestic product in 2009, equal to \$14.6 billion per year. Of that, at least 20 percent, or \$3.07 billion, is provided by wild pollinators that depend on suitable land for nesting and foraging.

Besides a lack of natural habitats, wild bees are also faced with other threats, including pesticide use, climate change and disease. However, Lonsdorf said their study did not address the impact of those other threats against the pollinators.

Lonsdorf said their research began about 2 1/2 years ago, and its timing was both coincidental and inevitable with the White House's Pollinator Health Task Force. A June 2014 presidential memorandum called for a national assessment of the nation's pollinators and their habitats due to a growing awareness of their economic importance and their recent declines. The White House's resulting report set a goal of restoring or enhancing 7 million acres of land for pollinators over the next five years through federal actions and public/private partnerships.

"Before this study, there was nothing that looked at pollinators and habitat on a nationwide level," he said. "There had been a bumblebee study, but not on the scale or scope of what we've done."

One of the most surprising things about their project was the difficulty they had finding experts who were willing to share their knowledge and assess



**A bumble bee on common milkweed. A new study shows that wild bee populations are rapidly declining due to the loss of habitat.**

PHOTO: Betty Hall

habitat quality. "The more you know about bees, the more you realize you don't know," Lonsdorf said. In fact, he said he is proud of the mapping they did that showed what they still don't know. "Often times, science is perceived as all knowing, but we proceed and make decisions on a lot of uncertainty. We wanted to show that."

However, Lonsdorf said he was not surprised that the habitat analysis suggested the Midwest and Corn Belt areas weren't great for bees. The model's confidence is greatest in agricultural areas with declining bees, matching both the consensus of the experts' opinion and available field data.

"If the habitat for bees is declining, then it's pretty likely the number of bees is declining too," he said. "But we don't know how concerned we should be. You can study mammals and make statements that a mammal is endangered based on its numbers. However, we don't know what those true numbers are for wild bees."

Their research, funded by the Integrated Crop Pollination Project, a U.S. Department of Agriculture effort, will next look into particular counties that may be at risk, and then look at individual farm fields at risk, as well as what methods of restoration are optimal.

"We can't put his habitat everywhere; we need to be strategic," Lonsdorf said. "Restoration costs money and some feed mixes can be expensive. We will do an economic analysis of feed mixes to find out which plants are best for pollinators,

and try to get the biggest return on our investment by identifying plants that best support bees and keep costs low.”

But Lonsdorf said the U.S. is heading to “very engineered landscapes” that consider the varying needs of people. For instance, they will need to use plants that provide good habitat for the bees, but not for crop pests.

“One of the best pollinator plants is sweet clover, which is a weed,” he said. “But it’s cheap, easy to grow and it does provide good pollinator habitat. There are tradeoffs and people will need to understand that.”

Thus, a balance needs to be found. “Part of the impetus for creating quantitative decisions is it allows us to put this into the decision-making process so we can start designing our landscapes a little more softly.”

Lonsdorf said they will be testing their ideas out and targeting a few places in states where they already have collaborators. But then it will be up to the USDA and their extension services, the National Resources Conservation Service, to take their findings and act on them.

While their current model is run in computer code, Lonsdorf said they will begin working with software designers to make it more assessable for farmers and technical advisers. For instance, it could work something similar to Cornell’s YardMap, which allows people to design their yard online and provides guidance on bird friendly plants. “I envision something like that for the farmer where he could predict the yield of a crop as a function of bee habitat in and around the area.”

Lonsdorf said a student recently came up to him and asked how much they still need to know about bees. The answer is a lot. “Bees are messy, there are lots of species and we are still figuring out which ones are important,” he said. “It will be a few more years before we know exactly how they contribute to crop pollination.”

However, some states are already taking action to increase pollinator habitat. As you read in our cover story, Ohio is one state to start and encourage pollinator habitat along the nation’s highways. Other states are also promoting native plants along roadway corridors.

As a result of 2013 pollinator legislation,

the Minnesota Department of Agriculture developed Best Management Practices to protect wild and managed insect pollinators by providing habitat for their survival and reproduction. In addition, the Washington state Department of Transportation recently updated its overall policy with regard to roadside design and management. This policy reinforces the requirement to preserve desirable native vegetation during construction and to restore cleared areas with native vegetation following construction.

The federal government is also exploring an Interstate-35 pollinator corridor effort with states and stakeholders. Why I-35? The 1,500-mile corridor from the Texas border with Mexico northward to Minnesota is also the same corridor monarch butterflies fly during their annual migration.

To help bolster Wisconsin’s pollinators, scientists at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the University of Wisconsin-Madison developed the Wisconsin Pollinator Protection Plan, unveiled in January 2016 in draft form, which provides information and recommendations designed to support pollinator populations around the state. The plan offers practical advice for state homeowners, gardeners, farmers, land managers and others on how they can help pollinators, as well as educates and encourages spreading the word about pollinator friendly practices. Indiana also has a similar draft Pollinator Protection Plan.

The Pollinator Stewardship Council has created a chart listing state efforts concerning pollinator plans. You can compare and contrast each state, review what your state has or has not accomplished, and discover whom to contact to start the process or be a part of the process.

As you may recall, Wild Ones is also trying to be part of the solution, partnering with the National Pollinator Garden Network in support of the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. The goal of the campaign is to register a million public and private gardens and landscapes to support pollinators. You can register your garden here.

Don’t have a native garden? Then start one; it doesn’t have to be large. Read “Preparation for a successful garden” on page 14 to learn how. 🌸

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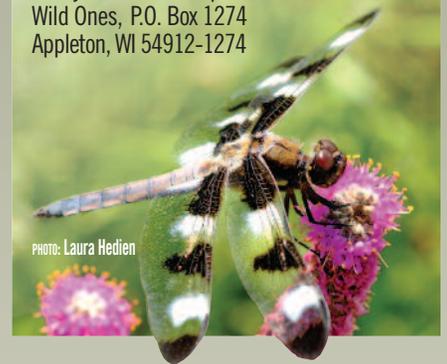


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Although no one has questioned us recently, we thought it would be a good time to remind everyone that your membership dues are tax deductible if you choose to itemize deductions on your tax return.

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- The JOURNAL will not be available to non-members by paid subscription or through newsstand sales;
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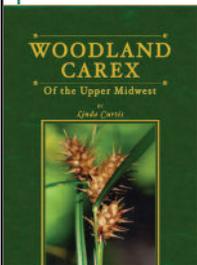


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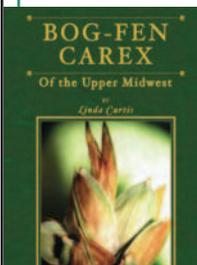
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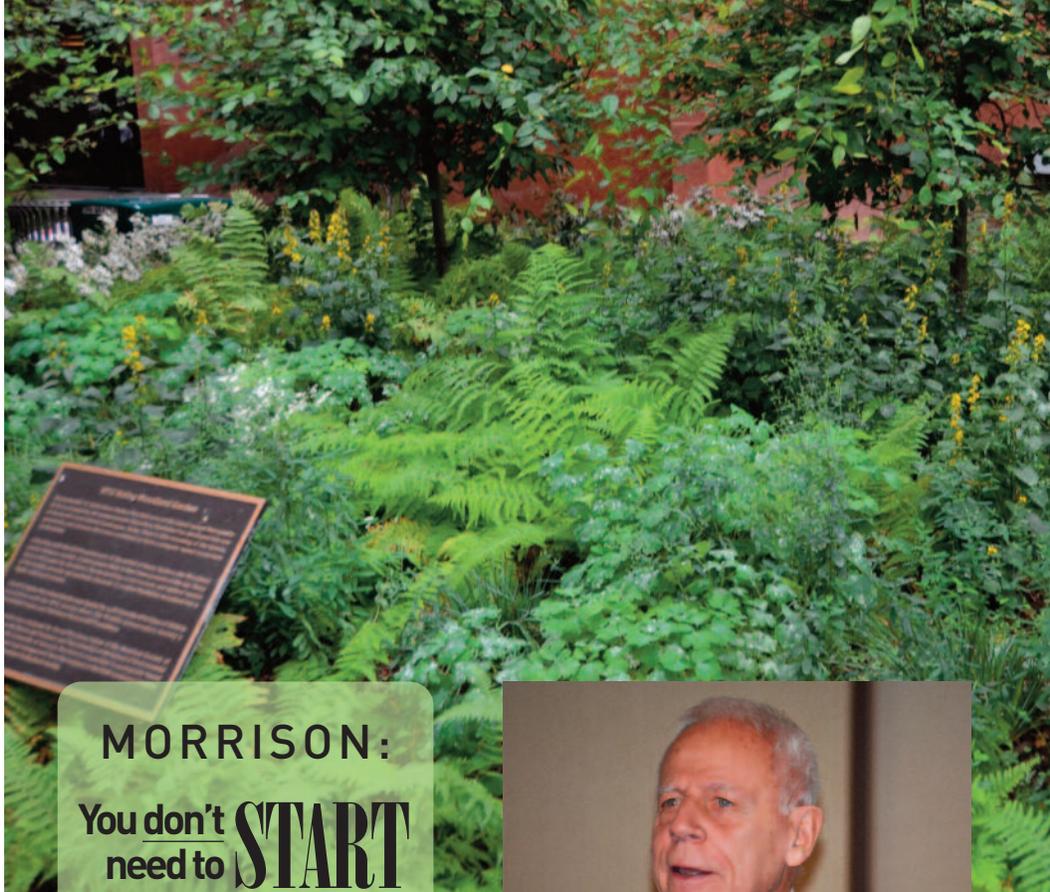
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MORRISON:  
You don't need to **START  
BIG**

By Donna Van Buecken  
and Barbara A. Schmitz,  
Fox Valley Area Chapter

Having been a major resource for the fledgling Wild Ones natural landscapers organization, Professor Darrel Morrison stepped down in 2014 as the Wild Ones' longest serving Honorary Director. Morrison presented the keynote at the Wild Ones Fox Valley Area chapter's very special 20th annual Toward Harmony with Nature Conference on Jan. 30. His message to the nearly 350 people in attendance was simple: You don't need to start big to create a native garden.

Morrison showed examples of some of his landscape designs, including those big and small. There are four goals when designing landscapes:

- Choosing ecologically sound plants matched with the right environment
- Finding plants that provide an experiential richness and provide a diverse landscape
- Selecting a design that showcases the "place" and acknowledges the differences among regions
- Creating a dynamic space that is ever-changing thanks to the migration of plants



Darrel Morrison was the keynote speaker at the Fox Valley Area chapter's 20th annual conference.

He recommends people think of "mass vs. space" when creating a native garden. You should include zones of trees and shrubs, zones of ferns and wild flowers, and lastly, open space. You also need to ensure that you adapt for conditions.

The steps to diversifying are simple. First, substitute. "Substitute an often-used non-native plant with a native one." Second, diversify. "Instead of having a single species for ground cover, mix it up." He suggested wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*) and other native species.

Native plants also make it easy to prevent weeds and other undesirable plants. Morrison gave an example of how purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) had become bothersome in one of his gardens. By planting switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), however, they were able to eradicate it. "Use the competition from desirable plants to thwart that type of invasion."



Darrel Morrison created this native woodland garden at New York University using plants that inhabited Manhattan over 400 years ago when Henry Hudson first came to the region.

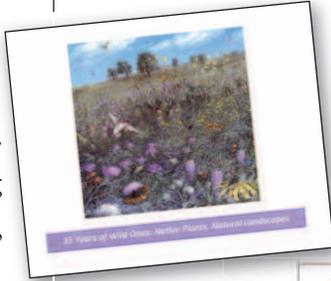
Is your chapter holding a conference this year?  
Send your stories and photos  
about it to [journal@wildones.org](mailto:journal@wildones.org).

He also suggests people don't pull weeds, but rather just cut them down to the ground. Pulling weeds disturbs the soil and often causes new seeds to be sown.

Morrison stresses that native landscaping doesn't need to be big to be successful. "You can do this in your own backyard." He suggests you look at the natural patterns as a basis for your landscape design. "Drift" spaces throughout your design, being sure to add various shades and color offered in plants such as columbine (*Aquilegia*) or Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*). Welcome the movement that comes with wild plants as species migrate and evolve. "That migration is what makes a dynamic landscape..." 🌿

**Editor's Note:** See related past articles from the JOURNAL: "On the Edge of a Sustainable Landscape" by Darrel Morrison, Page 2, and "Darrel Morrison: Merging Art with Ecology in Landscape Design" by Nancy Aten, Page 12.

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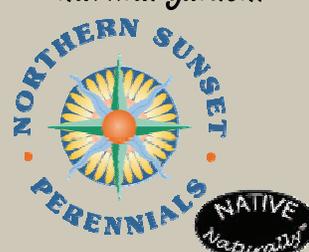
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**Milwaukee-Southwest, Wis.** – 24 years  
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**Twin Cities, Minn.** – 15 years  
**Red Cedar, Mich.** – 14 years  
**Wolf River, Wis.** – 12 years  
**Mid-Mitten, Mich.** – 10 years  
**Oak Openings Region, Ohio** – 9 years  
**Kettle Moraine, Wis.** – 5 years  
**Northfield Prairie Partners, Minn.** – 5 years

## Mark Your Calendars

### March 3-6

37th Annual West Michigan Home & Garden Show  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

### March 5

Tennessee Valley Chapter's "Plant Natives Annual Symposium"  
University of Tennessee, Chattanooga

### March 12

Landscaping with Colorado Native Plants Conference  
Loveland, Colo.

### April 22

Earth Day

### April 29

Arbor Day

### May 2-8

National Wildflower Week  
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

### May

American Wetlands Month

### June 20-26

National Pollinator Week

### August 19-21

Wild Ones 37th Annual Conference  
WILD Center, Neenah, Wis.

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# The Meeting Place

## COLORADO

**Front Range Chapter #86**  
Susan Smith 720-445-1506  
frontrangewildones@gmail.com

## CONNECTICUT

**Mountain Laurel Chapter #78**  
Janis Solomon  
jisol@conncoll.edu  
Allen Gauthier  
landscape653@gmail.com

## ILLINOIS

**Greater DuPage Chapter #9**  
Pat Clancy 630-964-0448  
pjclancy41@gmail.com  
**Illinois Prairie Chapter #92**  
Sherrie Snyder 309-824-6954  
ilprairiewo@gmail.com  
■ [Illinois Prairie Wild Ones](#)

**Lake-To-Prairie Chapter #11**  
Sandra Miller 847-546-4198  
saran2@aol.com

**North Park Chapter #27**  
Wilma McCallister, bug788@gmail.com

**Northern Kane County #88**  
Dave Poweleit 847-794-8962  
nkwildones@gmail.com

**Rock River Valley Chapter #21**  
Ginnie Watson [Ginnie@wildonesRRVC.org](mailto:Ginnie@wildonesRRVC.org)  
Constance McCarthy  
[Constance@wildonesRRVC.org](mailto:Constance@wildonesRRVC.org)  
Chapter phone: 815-627-0344

**Southwest Illinois Chapter #101**  
Sandra Fultz  
[skfultz@yahoo.com](mailto:skfultz@yahoo.com)

**Tupelo Chapter # 105**  
Shannon Harms 618-559-6914  
prnpp2013@gmail.com

**West Cook Chapter #97**  
Pamela Todd  
[pamtodd@comcast.net](mailto:pamtodd@comcast.net)

**Wild Ones of Will County Chapter #100**  
Bonnie Mesewicz [bmez05@comcast.net](mailto:bmez05@comcast.net)  
■ <https://www.facebook.com/WillCountyWildOnes?ref=hl>

## INDIANA

**Gibson Woods Chapter #38**  
Pat Rosenwinkel [patrosen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:patrosen@sbcglobal.net)

## KENTUCKY

**Lexington Chapter #64**  
Beate Popkin [beatepopkin@qx.net](mailto:beatepopkin@qx.net)

## MICHIGAN

**Ann Arbor Chapter #3**  
Andrea Matthies 734-604-4674  
[andrea@jamesodell.com](mailto:andrea@jamesodell.com)

**Central Upper Peninsula Chapter #61**  
Laurie Johnsons 906-428-4358  
[yooperchic@chartermi.net](mailto:yooperchic@chartermi.net)

**Kalamazoo Area Chapter #37**  
Mike Klug  
[klug@mei.net](mailto:klug@mei.net)

**Mid-Mitten Chapter #80**  
Robert Maxwell 989-708-4884  
[beysib1959@yahoo.com](mailto:beysib1959@yahoo.com)

**North Oakland Chapter #91**  
Jane Giblin 248-877-1434  
[jgiblin705@gmail.com](mailto:jgiblin705@gmail.com)



**Oakland Chapter #34**  
Maryann Whitman 248-652-4004  
[maryannwhitman@comcast.net](mailto:maryannwhitman@comcast.net)

**Red Cedar Chapter #41**  
[wildoneslansing@gmail.com](mailto:wildoneslansing@gmail.com)  
Betty Seagull 517-349-1373

**River City-Grand Rapids Area Chapter #83**  
Maribeth Bolt 616-450-3001  
[meribethbolt@aol.com](mailto:meribethbolt@aol.com)  
[president@rivercitywildones.org](mailto:president@rivercitywildones.org)

**Southeast Michigan Chapter #47**  
Warren, Michigan  
Fred Kaluza 586-939-2470  
[prettypuddles@yahoo.com](mailto:prettypuddles@yahoo.com)

## MINNESOTA

**Arrowhead Chapter #48**  
Carol Andrews 218-529-8204  
[candrews@barr.com](mailto:candrews@barr.com)

**Big River Big Woods Chapter #108**  
Sherry Sanders, [ibmgirlx@aol.com](mailto:ibmgirlx@aol.com)  
■ <https://www.facebook.com/Wild-Ones-Big-River-Big-Woods-1650671815222644/?ref=nf>

**East metro St Paul Area**  
Sherry Sanders, [ibmgirlx@aol.com](mailto:ibmgirlx@aol.com)

**Northfield Prairie Partners Chapter #94**  
Arlene Kjar 507-645-8903  
[lizzkjar@q.com](mailto:lizzkjar@q.com)

**Prairie Edge Chapter #99:**  
Marilynn Torkelson 952-906-1482  
[marilynntorkelson@gmail.com](mailto:marilynntorkelson@gmail.com)  
■ <https://www.facebook.com/wildonesprairieedge>

**St. Cloud Chapter #29**  
Brian Johnson 320-356-9462 [bjohnson@csbsju.edu](mailto:bjohnson@csbsju.edu)

**St. Croix Oak Savanna Chapter #71**  
Kathy Widin 651-338-3651  
[kdwidin@comcast.net](mailto:kdwidin@comcast.net)  
Roger Miller [st.croix.wild.ones@mac.com](mailto:st.croix.wild.ones@mac.com)  
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**Twin Cities Chapter #56**  
Julia Vanatta 612-722-6371  
[juliakay@scc.net](mailto:juliakay@scc.net)

## MISSOURI

**Mid-Missouri Chapter #49**  
Laura Hillman [HillmanL@health.Missouri.edu](mailto:HillmanL@health.Missouri.edu)

**St. Louis Chapter #31**  
Marsha Gebhardt 314-303-8309  
[gramg63@gmail.com](mailto:gramg63@gmail.com)  
[www.stwildones.org](http://www.stwildones.org)

## NEW YORK

**Habitat Gardening in Central New York #76**  
Janet Allen 315-487-5742 [hg.cny@verizon.net](mailto:hg.cny@verizon.net)  
■ <http://www.facebook.com/hgcnycny>

## OHIO

**Columbus Chapter #4**  
Barbara Velez Barbosa  
[barb\\_carson@hotmail.com](mailto:barb_carson@hotmail.com)

**Dayton Area Chapter #106**

Janet Lasley, janetoineylasley@gmail.com

**Greater Cincinnati Chapter #62**

Chris McCullough 513-860-4959

Cincywildones@fuse.net

**Oak Openings Region Chapter #77**

Hal Mann 419-874-6965

wildonesoakopeningsregion@gmail.com

■ <https://www.facebook.com/wildonesoakopenings>

**OREGON**

**Monarch Butterfly Alliance**

**Chapter #107 (seedling)**

Westside Village Magnet School, Bend, OR

Wendy Winchel, wendy.winchel@bend.k12.or.us

**TENNESSEE**

**Smoky Mountains Chapter #104**

Leo Lubke 865-932-9862

lhlubke@aol.com

**Tennessee Valley Chapter #96**

Cheri Hubbard (423) 886-6300

cherihubbard09@gmail.com

Marti Owensby (423) 309-0579 (mobile)

sewmarti@aol.com

Nora Bernhardt (423) 886-3867

nsbernhardt@gmail.com

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**VIRGINIA**

**Blue Ridge Chapter #98**

Donna Stekli 304-258-9822

gardener@astarz.com

**WISCONSIN**

**Central Wisconsin Chapter #50**

Pete Arntsen 715-297-374

apete@fibernetcc.com

**Door County Chapter #59**

Peter Sigman 920-824-5193

peter@sigmann.net

**Fox Valley Area Chapter #8**

Loris Damerow 920-749-7807

Kristin Kauth 920-766-2292

wildonesfoxvalley@gmail.com

**Green Bay Chapter #10**

Justin Kroening 920-716-2879

kroeningjustin@gmail.com

**Kettle Moraine Chapter #93**

Mariette Nowak 262-642-2352

mmnowak@wi.rr.com

**Madison Chapter #13**

Barb Glassel 608-819-0087 bglassel@gmail.com

Sue Reindollar 608-233-9383

**Menomonee River Area Chapt. #16**

Lisa Oddis 414-303-3028

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Message Center: 414-299-9888 x2

■ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wehr-Wild-Ones-Southwest-Milwaukee-Wisconsin-Chapter/23152099025>

5238

**Root River Area Chapter #43**

Chris Russin 262-857-3191

c-russin@northwestern.edu

**Wolf River Chapter #74**

Bob Dumke 715-924-3117

cobblerscloset@frontiernet.net

One would think the WILD Center would be dormant over the winter months, but that is not the case. Our grounds are open year-round to the public.

Despite that winter is winding down, we continue to host cross-country skiers and those who prefer traveling by snow shoes, ice fishermen and women, eagle watchers, photographers and other outdoor enthusiasts. Our volunteers are also busy, such as Dave Edwards who worked to over-seed the south end of our prairie with the help of Executive Director Gail Gerhardt.

The WILD Center is also home to deer, a red fox, mice, rabbits and several types of birds. Our national headquarters abounds with wildlife and people enjoying many activities throughout the year.

There is an eagle's nest near the south end of the property. In January, the WILD Center was a viewing site for "A Day with Eagles Along the Fox

**Winter at the WILD Center**

River," a program that encourages people to learn more about eagles and to view eagles in their natural habitat. Donna VanBuecken, who retired in 2015 as Wild Ones executive director, spent the day at the WILD Center, allowing participants to access our building and enjoy refreshments while warming up from the bitter cold.

Eagles were endangered in the 1960s and 1970s due to contaminants like DDT and PCBs. Eagle recovery had its roots in Wisconsin with the ban of DDT in 1969, followed by a national ban in 1972. Today, eagles are making a comeback in the Fox River Valley and the nation. Another WILD Center volunteer and Wild Ones member, Dave Peck, is very instrumental in eagle monitoring and accesses the center during the year as part of this project. Thank you to all our special winter volunteers and the roles you play in environmental and conservation education and advocacy year round.



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Donna & John VanBuecken, Framed  
“Requiem” print & various tools,  
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Jacki Kossik PHOTO

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Go to: <http://www.wildones.org/product/membership/gift-membership/>

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• Outdoor use security or game cameras • Crock pots • Sealer for wood deck • Vacuum cleaner • Gardening Tools • Native trees (6 to 8 ft.) basswood and maple • Native shrubs: Witchhazel • Woodland plants: grasses, ephemerals, ferns, etc.

Contact the Headquarters office if you have other items that may be suitable for use by Wild Ones. We now have someone in the office from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday - Friday. Or call for an appointment: 877-394-9453

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# GET WILD STAY WILD

## How You Can Help Support Our Mission

There are many ways you can help Wild Ones promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities – including financial support or volunteering your time. You can choose to provide additional support in various ways. Which of these might work for you?

### Annual Support

Annual gifts, in addition to membership fees, provide critical ongoing resources to support daily operations and enable Wild Ones to carry out its mission throughout the year.

### Acorn Circle

Members provide dependable income for Wild Ones programs by making their annual gifts through convenient monthly deductions via credit card or direct debit from a designated financial account. Any amount is greatly appreciated.

### Burr Oak Circle

Donors who make annual gifts of \$1,000 or more are honored through this leadership circle program, and are provided with special benefits such as special retreats at the Wild Ones headquarters and a 10 percent discount on items at the Wild Store.

### Oak Savanna Circle

Members of this circle have loyally supported Wild Ones for at least 15 years or more.

### Employee Matching Gift Program

Many companies and organizations match employee contributions, greatly increasing the impact of a charitable gift to Wild Ones. Please contact your human resources office for further information.

### Special Gifts and Heritage

Contact the Wild Ones Executive Director for further information about the Wild Ones Legacy Program which includes making gifts of appreciated stock, real property, in-kind gifts, IRA-rollover gifts (option through December 2013 per the Pension Protection Act of 2006 amended), and multi-year commitments. The Legacy Program (see Wild Ones Legacy Program – Estate-planning) also can include bequests, charitable gift annuities, trusts, and other planned giving vehicles which provide significant support to Wild Ones while also benefiting the donors and their families.

### Volunteer

More than 6,000 people annually volunteer their time and energy for land conservation, community garden plantings, and other chapter and national Wild Ones activities. Please consider becoming a “plants-roots” partner with Wild Ones.

### Lifetime Members

Lifetime members have shown a long-term commitment to the Wild Ones mission and its goals.

### Gift Memberships

One of the easiest ways to advocate and help others who are not already Wild Ones members learn about the benefits of using native plants in their landscaping is to give them a gift membership.

For more information on supporting Wild Ones, contact Gail Gerhardt, Executive Director, Wild Ones, P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, WI 54912-1274, 877-394-9453 (toll free), [woresource@newbc.rr.com](mailto:woresource@newbc.rr.com), or visit our website at [www.wildones.org](http://www.wildones.org).

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Twin Cities Chapter

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[www.marshlandtransplant.com](http://www.marshlandtransplant.com)  
Fox Valley Area Chapter

### Morning Sky Greenery

44804 E. Highway 28  
Morris, MN 56267  
[www.morningskygreenery.com](http://www.morningskygreenery.com)  
St. Cloud Chapter

### Mystic Natives Horticultural Services

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Mystic, CT 06355-2105  
Mountain Laurel Chapter

### Ohio Prairie Nursery

11961 Alpha Road  
Hiram, OH 44234-0174  
[www.ohioprairienursery.com](http://www.ohioprairienursery.com)  
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31646 128th Street NW  
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[www.prairieresto.com](http://www.prairieresto.com)  
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[www.weradtker.com](http://www.weradtker.com)  
Menomonee River Area Chapter

## NEW BUSINESS MEMBER

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Illinois Prairie Chapter

## Frankfort Square Park District

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Frankfort, IL 60423  
Will County Chapter

## Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden

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Rockford, IL 61102  
Rock River Valley Chapter

## Oak Brook Park District

Dean Nature Sanctuary  
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Oak Brook, IL 60523-2159

[www.obparks.org](http://www.obparks.org)

Greater DuPage Chapter

## Shaw Nature Reserve

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Highway 100 & I-44  
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[www.missouribotanicalgarden.org](http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org)

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## MAEscapes

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Karonah, NY 10536  
[www.bedfordaudubon.org](http://www.bedfordaudubon.org)  
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### Pierce Cedar Creek Institute

701 W. Cloverdale Road  
Hastings, MI 49058  
Kalamazoo Area Chapter

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2415 Gibley Park Road  
Toledo, OH 43617  
Oak Openings Region Chapter

## Roger Miller

13711 47th St. Court N  
Stillwater, MN 55082-1239  
St. Croix Oak Savanna Chapter

## Applied Ecological Services / Taylor Creek

P.O. Box 256  
Brodhead, WI 53520-0256  
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## Blossom Home Child Care

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Northfield, MN 55057  
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Midland, MI 48640  
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### Wyn Miller

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Chattanooga, TN 37409  
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### Elisabeth A Raleigh

32 Barton St.  
Somerville, MA 02144-1508  
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S87 W. 34910 Nesting Lane  
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# FOREVER WILD

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