A voice for the natural landscaping movement.

Working toward our next four decades restoring native plants and natural landscapes.
Thank you and goodbye

Tim Lewis
President

This is my last column because I am passing the virtual gavel (and pen) to your new president, Janice Hand. It has been my privilege to serve as your president these last six years. It has been very rewarding.

Several years ago, I was asked to serve as a director on the Board of Directors, and a few years later I was asked if I would be on the ballot as president. I was happy to serve because it gave me the opportunity to make a difference in Wild Ones. It has been a way for me to give back to the organization that has taught me the benefits of native landscaping. I am very proud of what Wild Ones has accomplished under my watch.

Some of those achievements come to mind:

- Changed from a working board to a policy board
- Established a set of governance policies
- Set up committees to do the work of the Board
- Completed our first financial audit and continue to have audits or reviews
- Created and implemented a strategic plan
- Moved the annual meeting, along with the leadership conferences, to the WILD Center
- Brought chapters and the national organization closer together to work as one organization
- Increased chapters from 44 to 50
- Formed partnerships with several like-minded organizations
- Revised the website to make it more engaging
- Set up a Facebook® page and actively post to it
- Created a Facebook discussion group for members
- Hired a new executive director after Donna VanBuecken's retirement
- Moved from a printed JOURNAL to an electronic one

I did not accomplish these things myself. I had the honor of working with the Board of Directors, two executive directors, headquarters staff, honorary directors, several committee chairmen and chairwomen, and Wild Ones members who all worked together as a team. Of course, important parts of the team are the chapters and members who help spread the word about landscaping with native plants. While we also dealt with a few challenges along the way, many things have had positive impacts on the organization.

I am confident that Janice will be a good leader and that Wild Ones will continue to grow because of all the passionate people involved. As she takes the lead, I will help Janice transition into her new role for a year as the immediate past president. It's also likely that I will be assigned special projects or participate on a committee. But I also plan on spending more time in my yard. So with this, I say thank you very much and goodbye.

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.
Kudos to Wild Ones volunteers

What is volunteerism? It is the practice of freely giving one’s time or talents for charitable, educational or other worthwhile activities, especially in one’s community.

Why is volunteerism important? It helps organizations or others who need help, but it also gives people a purpose and a deep sense of satisfaction. In short, it makes people feel good.

Why do people choose to volunteer? They believe in the cause, they want to help others and they want to make a difference. Yes, even one person can make a big difference. This describes Dave Edwards, a dedicated volunteer at the WILD Center, the Wild Ones national headquarters. Every time he comes in he has a big smile and a story or two to share. He has a heart of gold, and he does whatever he can to make the world around us a better place. Who is the Dave Edwards in your chapter? Have you thanked him or her lately?

Wild Ones was founded on volunteerism. Everyone members do impact our organization and the communities we live in. Whether you Plant a Seed with someone who is not familiar with native plants, Plant a Seed with others at a Wild Ones booth, Plant a Seed with a neighbor who doesn’t understand why you have a rain garden, or Plant a Seed with a small child who is fascinated with your butterfly garden, you make a difference. These are all volunteer activities that help make our organization strong.

Without volunteers like yourself, Wild Ones would not and could not exist. Our national Board of Directors, every national committee member, our chapter officers and committee chairmen and chairwomen all volunteer their time and effort, with little thanks. But I want you to know that all our members who give of their time to spread the word or help where they can at chapter activities are very much valued and appreciated.

“The breeze, the trees, the honey bees – All volunteers!”
— Author Juliet Carin reap

Without your individual commitment and dedication to Wild Ones, this organization would not be what it is today. Kudos to our volunteers for choosing to make a difference. You truly are “Healing the Earth One Yard at a Time.” Thank you!

Chapter Challenge brings in 259 new members

The Plant a Seed Chapter Challenge, held May 1 through July 31, 2016, gave chapters the opportunity to win prizes for their efforts to bring in new members. The two leading chapters were the Illinois Prairie chapter with 34 new members and the Tennessee Valley chapter with 19 new members. Each of these chapters will receive their choice of a banner or table runner with their Wild Ones chapter logo on it to use at events. Congratulations to both chapters for their efforts.

A big thank you also goes out to the 44 chapters that participated in the Chapter Challenge; together, they brought in 259 new members. To see how your chapter did, click here.
If you have been following monarch-related news, you know that the monarch population increased last year, only to be struck by a severe storm in March while they overwintered in Mexico. So as I awaited arrival of monarchs to our yard in late spring, I started thinking about how best to welcome them and create additional habitat.

Over the years, I have experimented with planting different milkweed and nectar species. What has worked in my yard may be different from what works at a university garden or at a friend’s yard only five or 10 minutes away. What milkweed species do monarchs prefer? What time of year are they likely to use different plants? What are the best nectar plants for yards?

In my experience, monarchs tend to use multiple milkweed species.

**PLANT MILKWEED FOR MONARCHS**

The Monarch Joint Venture is a partnership of federal and state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and academic programs that are working together to protect the monarch migration across the lower 48 United States.

**MISSION**
Recognizing that North American monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) conservation is a responsibility of Mexico, Canada and the U.S., as identified in the North American Monarch Conservation Plan, this Joint Venture will coordinate efforts throughout the U.S. to conserve and protect monarch populations and their migratory phenomena by developing and implementing science-based habitat conservation and restoration measures in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. Our mission will be achieved by coordinating and facilitating partnerships and communications in the U.S. and North America to deliver a combination of habitat conservation, education, and research and monitoring.

**VISION**
The vision of this Joint Venture is abundant monarch populations to sustain the monarch migratory phenomena into perpetuity, and more broadly to promote monarchs as a flagship species whose conservation will sustain habitats for pollinators and other plants and animals.

Monarch Joint Venture
University of Minnesota
monarchs@monarchjointventure.org

**MONARCH JOINT VENTURE**
Partnering across the U.S. to conserve the monarch migration
www.monarchjointventure.org

**Milkweed Regions**
There are many native milkweed species in each of the six “Milkweed Regions” shown on this map. The species highlighted are known to be used by monarchs, and are easy to establish. Please try to find plants grown as close as possible to where you’ll be planting them, and from the closest possible seed source.

**Wild Ones Chapters by Milkweed Zone**

**WEST**
- Colorado
- Oregon

**NORTHEAST**
- Connecticut
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kentucky
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- New York
- Ohio
- Virginia
- Wisconsin

**SOUTHEAST**
- Tennessee
Monarch preferences may differ between garden locations, or from week to week or even from year to year. That is why I always stress the importance of planting more than one milkweed species in any garden or restoration project. For example, monarchs preferred swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*) in my yard for years. More recently, however, in spring they seem to prefer common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) over both swamp milkweed and butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*). But in late summer, they tend to prefer swamp milkweed as my common milkweed becomes older and tougher. Monarch females are most attracted to healthy, young, lush and tender milkweed plants, so having a milkweed species that stays green later into the season can help attract monarchs. Swamp milkweed and whorled milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*) both meet this requirement and can help you sustain monarchs in your garden late in the breeding season.
Try to observe your garden and note patterns in monarch preferences for different milkweed species. Compare what you see with what other observers are seeing in their yards. You might be surprised at what you learn. In a hospice garden I designed, monarchs clearly prefer the butterfly weed and ignore the common, swamp and Sullivant’s (Asclepias sullivantii) milkweed. In a nearby friend’s yard they only use her swamp milkweed and seldom use the common milkweed or butterfly weed. In my yard, as mentioned earlier, their preferences vary from spring to late summer.

To keep track of your observations, consider using the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project datasheet 1C, which will allow you to not only keep track of the monarch eggs and caterpillars found in your garden, but also to record the milkweed species upon which you found the monarchs. Save your datasheets, and use them for reference from year to year. You can also enter your data online at the MLMP website and include your observations about milkweed preference in the notes section of your report. Your report will be archived on the MLMP website, which is a citizen science project involving volunteers from across the United States and Canada in monarch research.

As you note which species of milkweed monarchs are utilizing, also note which nectar species they seem to prefer. In my northwest Ohio yard, I have found they especially enjoy milkweed, New England asters (Aster novae-angliae) and stiff goldenrod (Oligoneuron rigidum). I now include these in every pollinator garden I create. I also noticed that there is a period in late summer when I have few butterfly-attracting natives in bloom. This period extends from the time my milkweed stops blooming to when my asters begin to bloom. Trying to figure out what could fill that void took a few years, but after some experimentation and observation I found that Joe Pye Weed (Eupatorium maculatum) is the perfect plant. No wonder, since I often saw it blooming at that time of year in roadside ditches throughout Michigan during my youth.

![Milkweed can thrive, even in planter boxes, as this display at the Toledo Zoo illustrates.](image)

**PLANT MILKWEED FOR MONARCHS**

### Southeast Region Milkweed Species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Butterfly Weed | ![Butterfly Weed](image) | *Asclepias tuberosa*  
Well drained soils.  
Bud Johnson Wildflower Center |
| Whorled Milkweed | ![Whorled Milkweed](image) | *A. verticillata*  
Prairies and open areas.  
Photo © Kim Davis & Mike Stangeland |
| White Milkweed | ![White Milkweed](image) | *A. variegata*  
Thickets and Woodlands.  
Photo by Melissa Wiggins |
| Aquatic Milkweed | ![Aquatic Milkweed](image) | *A. perennis*  
Hydrated soils.  
Photo © Kim Davis & Mike Stangeland |
| Sandhill/Pinewoods Milkweed | ![Sandhill/Pinewoods Milkweed](image) | *A. humistrata*  
For use in some regions of FL.  
Dry sandy areas and soils.  
Photo © Kim Davis and Mike Stangeland |

Note: *Asclepias syriaca* and *A. incarnata* are native to parts of this region and may also be suitable species to plant. More details on the native range of each species can be found at: [http://bonap.net/NAPA/TaxonMaps/Genus/County/Asclepias](http://bonap.net/NAPA/TaxonMaps/Genus/County/Asclepias)

### Western Region Milkweed Species

**NOTE:** Excludes Arizona; see page 7 for Arizona milkweed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mexican Whorled Milkweed | ![Mexican Whorled Milkweed](image) | *A. fascicularis*  
Dry climates and plains, except in CO, UT, NM & AZ.  
Photo by Christopher Christie |
| Showy Milkweed | ![Showy Milkweed](image) | *A. speciosa*  
Savannahs and prairies.  
Photo by Robert Potts © Caliternia Academy of Sciences |

*Common names vary from place to place, so we have used the USA names for consistency.*

**Selecting and Finding Milkweed Plants**

While any of the species listed here can be grown in garden settings, please use species that are native to your county for larger restoration projects. You can find more information about milkweed, together with a directory of native plant vendors that sell milkweed plants and seeds, on our website: [www.plantmilkweed.org](http://www.plantmilkweed.org)
Finally, if you do not have a lot of space to grow milkweed, do not give up. While some species have long taproots and may struggle a bit when grown in pots, species like common milkweed and swamp milkweed can do very well with the appropriate soil mix in containers, planter boxes and even raised planter boxes. Swamp milkweed grows well in containers due to the more compactness of its root system. Common milkweed will need a deep container to accommodate its long taproot, so choose a container that is at least two feet deep and cover any drainage holes with landscape fabric. If you plant common milkweed in a planter box, cover the bottom of the box with landscape fabric as well. You can also plant common milkweed in a black plastic pot recycled from your local nursery, and bury the whole pot in the ground, leaving just 1-2 inches of the rim above the ground. Hide the rim with mulch. Again, cover any drainage holes with landscape fabric to prevent the roots from escaping the pot. This is a great way to prevent more aggressive milkweed species from taking over a formal garden! By using containers, your new garden can also now be mobile, allowing you to take milkweed plants to pollinator events and educational programs.

Planting milkweed not only helps monarchs, but it also supports many other pollinators, birds and wildlife. Including a variety of milkweed species and native nectar sources in your yard can ensure that you will have an attractive and well-designed habitat for your garden guests. If you plant it, they will come! 🌿

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/.

SOURCE: Monarch Joint Venture

California Milkweed Species

Mexican Whorled Milkweed
Asclepias fascicularis
Dry climates and plains.
Photo by Christopher Christie

Showy Milkweed
Asclepias speciosa
Savannas and prairies.
Photo by Robert Perk © California Academy of Sciences

Desert Milkweed
Asclepias erosa
Desert regions.
Photo by Christopher Christie

Heartleaf Milkweed
Asclepias cordifolia
Rocky slopes.
Photo by Dee E. Warren

Woolly Milkweed
Asclepias vestita
Dry deserts and plains.
Photo © 2010 Neal Kramer

Woolly Pod Milkweed
Asclepias eriocarpa
Clay soils and dry areas.
Photo by Br. Alfred Brousseau, St. Mary's College

Arizona Milkweed Species

Butterfly Weed
Asclepias tuberosa
Well drained soils.
Photo by Gail Morris

Antelopehorns Milkweed
Asclepias asperula
Desert and sandy areas.
Photo by Kip Kiphart

Rush Milkweed
Asclepias subulata
Desert areas.
Photo by Gail Morris

Arizona Milkweed
Asclepias angustifolia
Riparian areas and canyons.
Photo by Morris Family
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If you want to create a landscaped prairie garden or a native garden that looks more formal, you won’t find much literature or designs how to do it. However, when I was a landscape designer by profession, I drew landscapes for clients using perennials, shrubs and trees. I thought the same principles would apply to prairie plants.

A few landscape designers are practicing using drifts of color by using native plants. I had visited Lurie Garden in Chicago and was so impressed by its use of color. I decided to use it as an example in my presentation.

The difference between planting a traditional prairie and one in which you use drifts of color is that the traditional prairie is usually started by seed. Drifts of color are achieved by using plants in groups. Planting in drifts of color is more of an artistic approach. One uses the color wheel to set color against color. Artists use the color wheel to place one color next to one another for different effects. For example, yellow or yellow green next to purple has a dramatic effect. Blue backgrounds give a receding perspective. Yellow next to orange equals a harmonious feeling. These concepts are the focus of the “The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden” by Roy Diblik. In the book, he uses famous landscape paintings. From the colors used in the paintings he matches the color to the prairie plant (foliage or flower color) and then places them in the garden space based on the effect he wants to achieve.

The Lurie Garden in Chicago in Chicago was designed using the “drifts of color” philosophy. The catalog has photos of all the plants, site requirements, and growing conditions. And now there are sample plant designs for pollinator gardens, butterfly gardens, rain gardens, etc. This catalog is the “Bible of native plants” in the industry. I always have one by my easy chair for quick reference.

If you’re new to native plants, a good rule of thumb is to learn 10 plants per year. Start with a small bed (10-foot by 10-foot). In three years time you will triple your plant inventory. Then you can increase the size of that bed or create another one. In the meantime you will have learned another 10 and so on.

Each year your knowledge will increase about which plants look best together, which plants will make bold statements and which ones you might use as filler for large areas.

Err on the side of starting small and working up to a large area. Try not to overwhelm yourself at the start for that has some defeating repercussions. Seeing success in the beginning has a way of propelling you forward to your final ‘dream garden’. When you get there, it will feel like a finished painting. You can stand back and admire — and then just maintain.

Editor’s note: Rosemary Eiden is a board member and mentor of the Fox Valley Area chapter of the Wild Ones. When discussing how to get younger members to activities last year, the group decided to pursue programming to address some of their needs. And the No. 1 request of younger members was how to design a landscaped prairie garden or a native garden that looked more formal. So Eiden set out to find out how to do just that in a recent presentation; here, she shares her findings.
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When Dennis Nagan became ill with severe systemic rheumatoid arthritis, he could no longer get into boats or take long drives to go “up north” anymore. So he brought “up north” to his backyard in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Nagan, a member of Fox Cities Wild Ones, created Memory Lake to honor his deceased parents, as well as to create new memories with his friends and family, and particularly with his grandchildren, Jakob, 12; Eli, 10; Easton, 2; and Claire, born in June.

His backyard is now filled with a 20-foot by 40-foot manmade lake that is stocked with perch and home to turtles and frogs, as well as a children’s beach and fishing dock. The lake is surrounded by more than 120 native plants that were specifically selected to create a garden that pollinators, and particularly monarch butterflies, would visit. Last year, he added two carved wooden bears to his backyard, one holding a “Memory Lake” sign; the other holding fish that are engraved with his grandchildren’s names.

His garden and pond will be three years old this September, he says, and he has nothing major planned for improvements this year. “I think things will really take off this year,” he says. “I don’t know if I can get more plants in; it’s pretty jammed, but I want it to look like a very natural setting.”

The yard includes a wide variety of more than 115 different monarch native plants, as well as over 24 native grasses. His favorite plants include blazing stars (Liatris), ironweed (Vernonia fasciculata), beebalm (Monarda didyma) and rattlesnake master (Eryngium yuccifolium). His yard is also home to blue spruce (Picea pungens) and black spruce (Picea mariana) trees, as well as water lilies.

His yard is already a favorite of pollinators, such as monarchs and bees, and birds, particularly hummingbirds and cardinals, he says. And, especially on bad days, when he isn’t feeling the best, he says he enjoys going out to his yard and just enjoying all of nature’s beauty.

**Editor’s Note:** We’d like to feature our members’ native gardens, large or small, in upcoming issues. If you’re interested in sharing your native garden, send two or three high-resolution photos, as well as a brief description, to journal@wildones.org. Please include your contact information so we can get in touch with you.

That’s what the annual Wild Ones National Conference on Aug. 19-21 was all about. More than 60 members from over seven states attended the conference, which was held at the WILD Center in Neenah, Wisconsin.

Many undoubtedly left with ideas and a renewed enthusiasm to enlarge or improve their own native gardens or improve their chapter’s efforts to attract new members, create new and engaging programs, and more. In fact, that’s the idea behind the conference, said Executive Director Gail Gerhardt.

“We certainly want people to have a good time, but we also want them to learn from the speakers, share their own knowledge with other members and take that knowledge home to Plant a Seed with their own communities about the importance of native plants,” she said.

Even rainy weather couldn’t dampen the spirits of convention-goers. Highlights included:

**Annual Meeting and Awards**

All outgoing board members were recognized with a special plaque for their service, but two deserve special mention for their distinguished and outstanding service: Tim Lewis and Bret Rappaport. Lewis has served Wild Ones for 12 years, including six years as national president, while Rappaport has served Wild Ones for 21 years, also including a stint as national president. Rappaport, a Chicago area attorney, has also agreed to continue on as corporation counsel. Thank you both for your many years of dedicated service!

Deb Muraro, who has volunteered to lay out and design the WILD ONES JOURNAL for three years, also received a citation for distinguished service for her extraordinary work in making the publication so aesthetically pleasing.

In addition, Gerhardt reported that Wild Ones membership has risen to 4,035, up 71 from a year ago, while the number of chapters grew from 47 to 50 and three seedlings within the year.

**Interesting Sessions**

While the first day’s sessions and activities are directed at the Board of Directors, the second day’s program is geared toward members. Activities included two keynote speakers and six workshops on topics as varied as how to create a great chapter newsletter, to tips to promote and grow your chapter, to how to develop partnerships and more.

Heather Holm, a Wild Ones member and landscape designer and consultant specializing in native pollinator plants, was one of the keynote speakers. She talked about how to select plants, shrubs and trees that support pollinators. She also led a pollinator walk through the WILD Center property, pointing out plants and insects.

The second keynote speaker was James Beard, author of “Growing People: How green landscape and garden spaces can change lives,” and retired agriculture and horticulture instructor at Fox Valley Technical College. He also talked about using strawbale system for planting.
Fun times

Whether it was watching the Hometown Habitat movie, enjoying the open house, or just snacking on ice cream treats from the WILD Center’s own little “ice cream truck,” the national conference was a chance to meet others with similar interests and passions. And what can be more fun than that?

Thank you

The conference couldn’t have happened without the support of our sponsors. A special thank you goes out to all our sponsors, including First Business Bank, Greater DuPage Chapter, Tennessee Valley Chapter, Fox Valley Area Chapter, Twin Cities Chapter and Illinois Prairie Chapter (Wildest Level sponsors); Ernst Conservation Seeds and Wildtype Design (Wilder Level sponsors); and Missouri Wildflower Nursery, Brian Zimmerman & Associate — Four Seasons Nursery, Gibson Woods Chapter and Lacewing Gardening & Consultation Services (Wild Level sponsors).

Welcome new board members; thank you to departing members

Wild Ones is pleased to welcome the following members to its Board of Directors: Nan Calvert from the Root River Chapter - Kenosha and Racine Area, Wisconsin; Denise Gehring from the Oak Openings Region Chapter - Northwest Ohio and border Southeast Michigan; and James Schultz from the Wolf River Chapter - Shawano, Wisconsin.

Those re-elected to the Board include Janice Hand, a Partner at Large member from Bozeman, Montana who has been named president; Daniel Segal from the Habitat Gardening in Central New York Chapter; and Karen Syverson from the Fox Valley Area Chapter, Wisconsin.

Congratulations! Wild Ones is looking forward to your leadership and expertise.

In addition, Wild Ones would like to thank the following for their dedication and years of service as they leave the Board. They include Katrina Hayes, 6 years; Tim Lewis, 12 years; Bret Rappaport, 21 years; William Snyder, 4 years; Richard Webb, 4 years; and Stephen Windsor, 7 years. You will all be missed.

All of these directors have served on various committees and some have also served as officers on the Board. If they are part of your local chapter, please send them a personal thank you for their hard work over the years. Many thanks again!
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<th>Name</th>
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<td>David Poweleit</td>
<td>[Ponderosa Pushover]</td>
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<td>Ken Greshowak</td>
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<td>2nd</td>
<td>Child or Children</td>
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<td>3rd</td>
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<td>Non-Residential Landscaping</td>
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<td>Donna VanBuecken</td>
<td>[Volunteers Cleaning Seed at the WILD Center]</td>
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Congratulations!

- Dawn Marie Staccia
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- Maya Sarikonda
- Alistair Bradley
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- Ed Buchs
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Study: Home garden pesticides pose greater danger to bees

A new study from Ohio State and Purdue universities shows that pollen collected by honeybees in fields was contaminated throughout the growing season with multiple agricultural pesticides, including neonicotinoids used as seed treatments.

However, the highest levels of contamination in pollen came from pyrethroid insecticides, which target mosquitoes and other pests and are generally purchased over-the-counter for use in home gardens. The study, “Non-cultivated plants present a season-long route of pesticide exposure for honeybees,” was authored by Elizabeth Y. Long of Ohio State University and Christian H. Krupke of Purdue University and printed in the May 2016 issue of Nature Publications.

Pollen collected by honeybees was identified and screened for agricultural pesticides over 16 weeks in 2011. Hives were placed at three sites: an open meadow, the border of a field growing season with multiple agricultural pesticides, including neonicotinoid clothianidin and three treatments.

Honeybee colonies remained at each site for the length of the growing season and from all crop and non-crop species in the vicinity. No matter where hives were located, most bees picked up pollen that contained large amounts of pesticides. For example, the hives in the meadow and pesticide-treated field yielded pollen with about 29 different types of pesticides, while the non-treated cornfield actually had slightly more at 31 types.

Read the complete study here.

Bee films making a buzz online

The film, “A Ghost in the Making: Searching for the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee,” tells the tale of natural history photographer Clay Bolt’s journey from state to state in search of this bumblebee. On his travels, Clay meets the scientists and conservationists working tirelessly to preserve it, until he finally comes face to face with his quarry in Madison, Wisconsin and discovers an answer to the question that has been nagging him: Why save a species?

The rusty patched bumblebee was once one of the most common native bees in the Eastern U.S. Today, its population is down 90-95 percent. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering listing it as an endangered species. To urge them to do so, as well as to urge the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the EPA to protect the rusty patched bumblebee, sign this Change.org petition.

“A Ghost in the Making” was produced by Day’s Edge Productions in partnership with the Xerces Society, with funding from Endangered Species Chocolate.

• • •

There are many factors that affect the health of honeybees. What people can do differently is one of them.

A 25-minute film, “The Bee Understanding Project,” is a story of four people — a commercial beekeeper, a farmer, a crop adviser and an entomologist — who swapped jobs to learn more about protecting bees. Instead of pointing fingers at each other, the movie shows what they learned, and how they could join together to make a difference and build partnerships.

Honeybees produce one in three bites of food we eat. The Honey Bee Health Coalition produced the film.

Wild Center Update

A new Eagle Scout project is allowing the Wild Center to access areas that were previously difficult to mow. Chad Steidl surveyed and measured the area, designed a bridge, raised funds to purchase materials for its construction, and then came and built the project on-site.

Chad, his parents Mary and Wade Steidl, and two other scouts, Trevor Kislewski and Aaron Esker, built a bridge across a ditch that was hard for us to get the lawn mower through without getting stuck. Now we can drive over the bridge and access the areas that need to be cut. A big thank you goes out to Chad and his team for a job well done!

Former Wild Ones Executive Director Donna VanBuecken always said, “If we build it, they will come.” With the help of our awesome Wild Center volunteers, she built the rain gardens, the prairie and the rest of our display areas, and she was right. The Wild Center is home to an abundance of insects, birds, bees, butterflies, several deer, two woodchucks, snakes, turtles, bats, cranes, blue herons, eagles, ducks, and the list goes on. The native plants have provided nectar, food, nutrients and water to many pollinators and ground animals.

The Wild Center provides a safe haven for many species since there is no hunting allowed on this property. Donna built it, and the pollinators and animals came. This is another example of how one member with a vision can Plant a Seed, which will have effects for years to come.

Chad Steidl earned his Eagle Scout Award for building and installing this bridge on the Wild Center property.

Photo: Mary Steidl

PHOTO: Mary Steidl
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An excellent strategy for insects or bugs to avoid being eaten is to be invisible. But we managed to spot a couple of creatures hiding in plain sight on a recent excursion to Texas just by knowing what we were looking for.

The outside color and patterns of many moths and butterflies are drab and random, making them more difficult to spot in shadows, or on gravel, rock or bark. Sometimes they may be mistaken for a dead leaf. The Red Admiral and American Snout are examples of this; in Texas, both are year-round residents with some migrating in.

It is also how people probably pass up viewing one of the most spectacular butterflies — the Mexican Bluewing. It prefers shaded woodlands and perches on the trunks of trees and higher branches. When it flies in the sun you may glimpse its iridescent blue-purple color alternating with black bands.

We were examining the green bark of a tree in the Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, trying to figure out if it was Palo Verde or Ratama, when Rich noticed a strange texture. Upon closer examination, we realized it was caterpillars! There were a half dozen or more at eye level. Our best guess was that it was a flannel moth. They were large, perhaps 4 inches long, rather flat with particularly hairy feet (the hairs emanating from a round white knob), though we never saw them move. When we enlarged the photos of the caterpillars we noticed two rows of uniformly spaced pairs of bumps down the center back and slightly raised rings between the segments. One of the rings had coloration near what I presume is the head end, although it is nearly impossible to tell which end is which. Literature shows irritating red spines may be projected from these crevices called mirrors. Pale greenish-grey and chestnut lines run the length of the body. The bark of the trees is smooth olive-green with thorns and patches, but wounds heal with a zipper look and I had the impression this caterpillar evolved to mimic that scarring.

Another “now you see it, not you don’t” butterfly is the Lyside Sulphur. There are other sulphurs with wing shapes more like leaves, but this one is an expert at slipping under a branch and tucking itself between leaves, making it the consummate impostor.

The veins on its wings have prominent ridges to add to the illusion it is only a leaf. I searched hard to find a photo at an angle where you could make out its body and legs. In the shadow it comes off as precisely the same shade of green as the leaf it is clinging to.

On our last day at Resaca de la Palma State Park, Rich spotted what I first thought was a weird walking stick. At first we thought its “arms” were damaged. But it was a Texas Unicorn Mantis. In addition to its knobby horns and leafy green appendages, it also has the peculiar habit of folding its arms back onto itself. We found another one not far away in the next hedge with a different leafy wing configuration. It is likely the one with the rounder wing is a female. The male has a more linearly shaped abdomen and much longer antennae. I love the way they always appear to be looking directly at you when you try to photograph them.

LAURIE YAHR is a member of the Madison, Wisconsin chapter of Wild Ones and has been writing the chapter’s monthly newsletter since 2001. She and her husband, Rich Kahl, spend most of their free time exploring and photographing the nearby arboretum, or state parks and natural areas in Wisconsin and wherever their travels take them. As a child, she remembers her mother taking her and her siblings on spring walks in the woods where she taught them the names of wildflowers. She also recalls finding her first gold-spotted monarch chrysalis hanging from the bottom of an apple at one of her grandfather’s orchards.
What good are sedges? You don’t have to look far to see the answer.

A pair of whooping cranes found a new home near a restored wetland along an Illinois River. A flock of 60 whooping cranes that usually migrated through found a new habitat on the floodplain and some stayed and built nests of sedge leaves.

The farmers along 11 sites in Illinois were paid to take their flood-prone croplands and restore them back to their original function of accepting spring floodwater. The National Resources Conservation Service Recovery Act offered funding to the landowners through the Emergency Watershed Protection-Floodplain Easement Program. Soon, sedges and other wetland plants flourished and waterfowl flew in and stayed. After that bird watchers came and would eat at local restaurants, increasing the cash flow in small towns along the river.

What sedges are recommended for floodplains? The NRCS-approved plant list includes grasses, rushes and sedges. The sedge genus Carex are tussock, C. stricta (Fig. 1), bottlebrush sedge, C. hystericina (Fig. 2), lake sedge or rip-gut, C. lacustris (Fig. 3), Bebb’s sedge, Carex bebbii (Fig. 4), fox sedge, C. vulpinoida (Fig. 5), and pointed broom sedge, C. scoparia (Fig. 6).

The selection of plants depends on which remnant species sprout in the floodplain from the seed bank in the soil. Sedge “seeds” are achenes, or dry fruits with tough outer skins like popcorn kernels, which persist in the soil for years. The sedges, grasses and rushes have rhizomes that form shoots and roots that grip the soil as a mesh and prevent erosion. The tufts of long leaves become food, nesting material, and resting habitats for wildlife and for us, scenic views.

Carex is the third most common genus in Wisconsin plants, but it has two main subgroups. One group has a narrow male terminal spike that is separate from the lower female spikes. The other group, Vignea, doesn’t have the separate male spike, and can be divided again into those that have stamens at the tips of numerous small spikes, the Fox Sedges including C. vulpinoida (Fig. 5), or those with stamens in the basal scales of the spikes, the Ovales, with winged flat seed sacs (Fig. 4) such as C. bebbii that grows in the prairie garden at the WILD Center in Appleton.

Of course, there are exceptions like tussock sedge, C. stricta, that has seed heads with a separate male spike most of the time but often has a combination of half and half spikes with males tips with stamens in the upper part of an otherwise in female spike (Fig. 1). Fox sedge, C. vulpinoida, does not have a separate male spike; its stamens are at the tips of its many small spikelets (Fig. 5).

Carex stamens are eaten by insects in addition to the leaves eaten by caterpillars of moths and butterflies. The Carex sedges are the base of a food chain; insects eat the sedges, and in turn become food for turtles, birds and other wildlife.

Birds such as the marsh wren and sedge wren feed upon the sedge seed heads and also upon the insects that fly into the marshes and sedge meadows. Perched on the nodding sedge culms, or stems, wrens sing their territorial songs, “This land is my land, this land’s not your land,” over and over.

Sedge wrens are prolific singers while marking their territory around sedge meadows and marshes. Even though quite small, they weave dry sedge leaves into domed basketlike nests that will keep their hatchlings safe and dry. Like other cavity nesters, the eggs are white and would be conspicuous to predators in an open nest.

LINDA W. CURTIS, a Wild Ones member, is author of two books on sedges: “Woodland Carex” and “Bog-Fen Carex,” both sold through the Wild Ones store and Prairie Moon Nursery. When she’s not sedge hopping in Lake County, Illinois, Curtis writes short stories and poems about life’s interesting conundrums, as well as science articles for Erigenia and Carex Corner for the Illinois Native Plant Society. Find more on her website at http://www.curtistothethird.com.

By Linda W. Curtis

C. vulpinoida

C. hystericina

C. scoparia

C. stricta

C. lacustris
GARDENING WITH
sedges

Carex is the largest North American plant genus with nearly 500 species. Although known for great diversity, in general sedges are perennials that resemble grasses and grow in shallow water or moist soils, often in thick clusters.

One of the best ways to bring nature into our lives is to welcome it into our own backyards. Sedges grow well in our gardens because their environmental niche is in places where soil, water, and light conditions are typically too harsh for other plants. Endless varieties bring color, texture and light conditions are typically too harsh for other plants. Endless varieties bring color, texture and light conditions are typically too harsh for other plants.

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ILLINOIS — A new University of Illinois study suggests that the invasive garlic mustard plant, which affects forested areas in the Midwestern and Eastern United States, may become less aggressive over time.

According to Science Daily, garlic mustard secretes a chemical called sinigrin into soil to deter the growth of other plants and decrease competition. Researchers have found that sinigrin concentrations decrease as garlic mustard populations age, demonstrating evolutionary change due to ecological processes. They predict that garlic mustard will decline and reach a balance with native species that re-colonize invaded areas.

IOWA — While the number of honeybees is falling nationwide, the number of beekeepers in Iowa is on the rise, Radio Iowa reports.

Dave Irvin, president of the East Central Iowa Beekeepers Association, says there are 127,000 beekeepers now in the state, up about 15 to 20 percent from two years ago.

Iowa bees produce about 4 million pounds of honey every year, valued at more than $8 million. In addition, the annual economic value of honeybees as crop pollinators in Iowa is estimated at $92 million.

IOWA, KANSAS, MINNESOTA, MISSOURI, OKLAHOMA and TEXAS — Six states’ transportation departments and the Federal Highway Administration recently agreed to implement measures to improve habitats along Interstate 35, known as the ”Monarch Highway” for pollinating species.

Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas and Minnesota signed the memo of agreement at the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Board of Directors meeting recently in Des Moines, Iowa, according to the TINewsDaily.com.

The idea behind the multistate pact is to increase the number of plants that provide refuge and food not just for butterflies, but also for other important pollinating insects, according to the Star Tribune.

The Monarch Highway is part of a program backed by President Obama, who formed a Pollinator Health Task Force in 2014.

MARYLAND — Maryland will become the first state to ban consumer use of neonicotinoid pesticides, prompted by concerns that neonicotinoid pesticides contribute to the mortality of pollinators such as bees, birds and butterflies.

According to Bloomberg BNA, the ban is slated to take effect Jan. 1, 2018 after Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan said he will allow S.B. 198 / H.B. 211 to become law without his signature.

The legislation, which includes exceptions for certified applicators, farmers and veterinarians, makes Maryland the first state to adopt such a ban on consumer use. Under the legislation, a person who violates the ban will be subject to a $250 civil penalty. The ban will apply to the sale and use of imidacloprid, nithiazine, acetamiprid, clothianidin, dinofeturan, thiacloprid, thiamethoxam and any other chemical designated by the Maryland Department of Agriculture as a neonicotinoid.

Maryland’s beekeepers lost nearly 61 percent of their hives last year, according to the Christian Science Monitor. Bee populations have been declining nationwide in recent years due to a combination of factors, including poor nutrition, disease and use of pesticides.

MINNESOTA and NORTH DAKOTA — An initiative aims to reintroduce prairie to Fargo-Moorhead and to make it much like it was before farming and urban sprawl ripped it up.

According to The Dickinson Press, Prairie Restorations Inc. is seeding 50 acres of Red River bottomland, mostly in Moorhead, Minnesota, with some work in Fargo, North Dakota, as part of the “Urban Woods and Prairies initiative,” which was paid for by Audubon Dakota.

Last year, Prairie Restorations tilled and seeded about 142 acres on the Fargo side of the Red River in areas where there were home buyouts and other flood mitigation efforts, said Blaine Keller, the firm’s site manager. “It’s a three- to five-year kind of thing until the full maturity,” Keller said. “It isn’t an overnight thing.”

The goal is to restore 1,500 acres of riparian prairie, floodplain forests and wetlands to their natural state. 🌿
“Mending the Earth in Milwaukee” has a simple message: you should garden for life, not for decoration. “I hope to put a nail in the coffin of lawns with this book,” says author and artist Ney Tait Fraser, a Wild Ones member from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. “But I think that is very optimistic. People are very attached to their lawns.” That’s an understatement. North America has lost 80 percent of its pollinators, thanks to monocultures of invasive plants such as Kentucky bluegrass that do not support America’s insects, Fraser says. Her 180-page book, which she worked on periodically for 10 years, contains 16 stories of Milwaukee area yards landscaped with native plants to create mini Gardens of Eden. Nearly all are Wild Ones members, and all had the courage to defy convention in their landscapes. Their yards sustain pollinators such as butterflies, and indigenous species of bees, birds and critters that feed raptors. But just as importantly, their yards demonstrate the benefits of using native plants. For instance, lawns become brown in hot spells, but yards landscaped with native plants are basically unaffected since they have adapted to Wisconsin’s climate over millions of years and are drought-resistant. In addition, the book includes stories of mistakes people made as they began their native plantings, in hopes that others won’t repeat those same mistakes. However, the stories of these beautiful yards are as much about the plants, as they are about the peoples’ journeys toward a lifelong interest in native landscaping. Most of the profiled gardens started small, and gradually grew larger as their owners’ interests and experiences with native plants grew. Sometimes, it was parents who instilled in their children a love and interest in nature. Other times, it was meeting someone else who had a passion for native plants. But for many of those featured in the book, it was Lorrie Otto who nurtured their interest in native plants. The inspiration for the Wild Ones, Otto is also responsible for getting DDT banned in Wisconsin. “Mending the Earth…” includes many photos and stories of Otto and her quest for people to transform landscapes into diverse natural habitats. There’s good reason why Otto is given prominent play in the book. Fraser writes: “Otto used the power of nature to transform people’s lives. Her personal dedication, energy, intellect and political efforts raised environmental consciousness. She was able to give Wisconsin’s native flora a place of horticulture honor, empowering native plant nurseries which did not exist before her campaign against laws and the lawn-care industry.” Not surprisingly, Fraser dedicated the book to Otto and “all the friends of the Earth” mentioned in its pages.

Besides telling the stories of the yards and people behind them, Fraser says her book will also help to preserve the yards, at least in people’s minds and hearts. “The tragedy is that these yards may disappear when home ownership changes,” she says. “Lorrie’s yard has already changed drastically since new owners moved in.” Interspersed with useful information such as how to prepare your gardening site for native plants, as well as illustrated with many photographs, “Mending the Earth…” can be purchased in Milwaukee at the Woodland Pattern Book Center, 720 E. Locust St.; Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, 111 E. Brown Deer Road; Urban Milwaukee: The Store, 755 N. Milwaukee St.; or at the Wehr Nature Center, 9701 W. College Ave., Franklin. You can also purchase a book by sending a check for $30 made out to Ney Collier to P.O. Box 170005, Milwaukee, WI 53217.

“Becky the Butterfly Girl” will make you wish your child or grandchild was just like Becky — inquisitive and appreciative of nature and its many wonders. And it might just be enough to get that special child in your life interested in caring for nature, and particularly for monarch butterflies.

Written by Janet Young, a member of the Greater DuPage, Illinois chapter of Wild Ones, the story is about a real-life girl who happens to be Young’s friend, 6-year-old Becky Lecroy. Becky’s parents, Joe and Sue, also belong to the Greater DuPage Wild Ones chapter.

“Becky comes with her mother and father to all the Wild Ones meetings, and we’ve gotten to know her and she’s gotten to know us,” Young says. “They’ve had yard showings and visits, and Becky is always there, full of enthusiasm as she tells us things about the garden or the butterflies.” In the book, Becky gives readers a tour of her yard, telling visitors all about her parent’s special flowers and plants that make it a safe and welcoming place for birds, bugs and butterflies. Becky’s enthusiasm is captivating and you find yourself eagerly turning each page to see just what makes her yard so special. You’ll learn about their pond, which is home to goldfish and provides drinking water for the animals that visit. She shows you birdhouses and bee houses, and a nest with eggs in a nearby bush. But her favorite part of the garden is the milkweed area, where monarch butterflies lay their eggs on the underside of milkweed leaves. Once they hatch, the young caterpillars depend on the plant’s leaves for food.

Becky and her family carefully move the young caterpillars into a screened “nursery,” where she helps to take care of the caterpillars as they grow, eventually releasing them after they become butterflies. The book explains in simple terms why lawns, while they might be neat and green, and chemicals and cement, aren’t the best for birds and bugs, and why birds and bugs depend on native plants and flowers to survive and thrive. It also explains how to care for monarchs throughout their metamorphosis to butterflies.
It’s great to watch nature do its work

Scale insects on the bark of the tree look more like bumps on the branches.

Story and photos by Donna Williamson

Last spring I noticed that my Magnolia sieboldii was looking wonky. This is usually a spectacular magnolia with downward facing blooms and red stamens in the center of the flower.

I thought maybe the terrible winter had damaged it. The leaves had come out, but the closer I looked, I saw that it had sooty mold. It’s called sooty mold because it looks like soot staining the bark or the leaves. It is a fungus that grows on the sugary poo of tiny leaf-sucking critters, often aphids or whiteflies. And, in my experience, sooty mold is a harmless symptom of insect activity. It doesn’t really hurt the tree.

I went to get my glasses so I could look more carefully at what was on my magnolia. It turned out that scale insects were all over the bark of the tree, looking like bumps on the branches. Scale insects are covered with something that looks like a shell, so they are very well protected. Some were large, some were tiny, but there were hundreds.

There are many different types of scale insects and they often attack a plant that is already in distress. Folks who have planted euonymous in a hot, sunny location will often see a lot of scale and over time, the plant deteriorates.

Bad winter, I thought. But I didn’t want more damage from the scale insects that suck out plant juices. And then I noticed that there were dozens of wasps in the magnolia, different colors and sizes, and they were feasting on the scale insects.

Two weeks later I went to check the magnolia again. The scale insects had been substantially reduced in number. The wasps had done their work. Even the sooty mold had faded on many of the leaves. There was less sugary poo around.

By September, there were just a few scale insects still hanging around. The wasps did a terrific job of controlling this outbreak. And I was able to avoid buying and using a chemical that would have killed all the insects out there – wasps and bees included.

Doug Tallamy, a professor and chairman of entomology and wildlife ecology at the University of Delaware, talks about achieving a natural balance in the garden where pest insects are largely controlled by other creatures – predatory insects, birds, toads, etc. It’s so great to see it all work!

DONNA WILLIAMSON is a garden designer and coach. She has taught gardening and design classes at the State Arboretum of Virginia, Oaklands Historic House and Gardens and Shenandoah University; she continues to hold classes in Waterford each winter. Her e-book, “The Mid-Atlantic Garden,” is available on Amazon. She is part of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Wild Ones, the only chapter in the mid-Atlantic. Email her at donnawilliamson2002@earthlink.net.
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Menomonee River Area Chapter (Wis.)

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Cicero, NY 13039
gail@landmasters.net
Habitat Gardening in Central New York Chapter (N.Y.)
NES Ecological Services
1250 Centennial Centre Blvd.
Hobart, WI 54155-9292
www.neswi.com
http://www.neswi.com
jhavel@releeinc.com
Green Bay Chapter (Wis.)
Out Back Nursery
15280 - 110th St. South
Hastings, MN 55033-9135
www.outbacknursery.com
tom@outbacknursery.com
Twin Cities Chapter (Minn.)
Shooting Star Native Seeds
P.O. Box 648
Spring Grove, MN 55974
www.shootingstarrnativeseed.com
http://www.shootingstarrnativeseed.com
info@ssns.co
Twin Cities Chapter (Minn.)
St. Aubin Nursery
35445 Irene Road
Kirkland, IL 60146
www.staubin.com
http://www.staubin.com
todd.sullivan@staubin.com
Rock River Valley Chapter (Ill.)

Phyllis Wolfe, Kalamazoo Area (Mich.)

DONATION – DISCRETIONARY
Candace Sarikonda, Oak Openings Region (Ohio): Cover brochure costs and shipping

DONATION – MISCELLANEOUS – GROW WILD ONES
Fenner Conservancy, Red Cedar (Mich.)
Herb Kohl Philanthropies, Partner-at-Large (Wis.)
Milwaukee County Zoo, Menomonee River Area (Wis.)

GENERAL OPERATING FUND – CHAPTER SUPPORT
Fox Valley Area (Wis.)
Greater DuPage (Ill.)

GRANTS HQ – OPERATIONS
Monarch Joint Venture, Twin Cities (Minn.)

NEW AFFILIATE MEMBERS
Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum
P.O. Box 626
South Haven, MI 49090-9173
www.libertyhydebailey.org
http://www.libertyhydebailey.org
info@libertyhydebailey.org
Kalamazoo Area Chapter (Mich.)
Winnebago County Parks Department
625 E. County Road Y #500
Oshkosh, WI 54901
www.co.winnebago.wi.us/parks
http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/parks
Fox Valley Area Chapter (Wis.)

RENEWING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR MEMBER
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Okemos, MI 48864-1609
welchrob@comcast.net
Red Cedar

NEW PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR MEMBER
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River Forest, IL 60305
burnsk@district90.org
West Cook
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1 yr – Smoky Mountains, TN
1 yr – Tupelo, IL
3 yrs – West Cook, IL
3 yrs – Front Range, CO
9 yrs – River City - Grand Rapids Area, MI
14 yrs – Lexington, KY
15 yrs – Central Upper Peninsula, MI
15 yrs – Greater Cincinnati, OH
16 yrs – Arrowhead, MN
16 yrs – Central Wisconsin, WI
18 yrs – St. Cloud, MN
18 yrs – St. Louis, MO
19 yrs – Menomonee River Area, WI
21 yrs – Madison, WI

www.gw-wildones.org/symposium--

Mark Your Calendars

September 24
6th Biennial Native Plant Symposium “Partners with Nature”
www.gw-wildones.org/symposium-shows.html

October 19 – 22
North American Association for Environmental Edcations 45th Annual Conference
www.naaee.org/conference

November 5
2016 Lake to Prairie Native Landscaping Conference “Growing Living Soil with Native Landscaping”
laketoprairie.wildones.org/2016-native-landscaping-conference

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Milwaukee Southwest-Wehr Chapter — Franklin Area
http://wildones.org/chapters/milswest/
Message Center: 414-299-9888 x2
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ter-231520990255238/

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http://rootriverarea.wildones.org/
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Wolf River Chapter — Shawano Area
http://wildones.org/chapters/wolfriver/
Bob Dumke 715-924-3117
cobblerscloset@frontiernet.net
How about a gift for:

- **Neighbors** who are redoing their landscaping
- **Local aldermen** who consider landscaping ordinances
- **Local inspectors** who decide what is/isn’t a “weed”

Better yet, how about:
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Go to: [http://www.wildones.org/product/membership/gift-membership/](http://www.wildones.org/product/membership/gift-membership/)

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Ladies Sizes: XS - XL $24.00
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www.wildones.org/wild-store or call 877-394-9453

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**Headquarters Wish List**

Volunteers to help with all sorts of things:
- Weeding demonstration gardens
- Recording bird and critter sightings
- Removing buckthorn
- Restoring woodland understory & overstory

**Things to help with all sorts of activities**:
- *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*: Witch hazel
- *Woodland plants*: grasses, ephemerals, ferns, etc.

Contact the Headquarters office if you have others items that may be suitable or 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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**Photo: Laura Hedden**