



Wild Ones

NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

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

Wild Ones members are special people

In the previous edition of the Wild Ones Journal, I wrote about tolerance for people interested in getting started with gardening and “newbies” to native plant gardening motivated by sustainability. COVID-19 has created a new appreciation for staying at home and improving our own immediate environs. As someone who has a lot to say about creating an inviting environment, I thank you for your patience with me. This time, I would like to recognize a virtue of Wild Ones members I know and many I do not (yet) know possess – resilience.

First, I would like to welcome people new to Wild Ones! Please know that we all started somewhere in this journey toward sustainability, supporting biodiversity and building back better wildlife habitats. Whether you manage 1,000 acres or a quarter-acre city lot, you are all contributing to rebuilding a habitat. We are here to help you.

I recently participated in several continuing education programs. One concerned measures we can take to increase bluebird populations. So often, well-meaning people believe that by providing bird feeders and mealworms and other “bait,” they will bring back wildlife. But birds, pollinators and other wildlife need more than that: pesticide-free living spaces, clean water, natural food and protection for their young. Our mission is to help those nature lovers understand that birds and other charismatic wildlife need much more than the bird feeders we erect on our patios and decks. As Doug Tallamy tells us – plant an oak tree if you want to install a bird feeder!

Regarding “resilience,” this is what I have observed about Wild Ones members:

Wild Ones members stand up to conventional gardening and test the marketplace. We go to big box stores and ask if their pollinator plants are treated with systemic pesticides. We understand that consumerism will drive the horticultural industry.

Wild Ones members withstand pressure from homeowner associations and instead use education and influence. For instance, the “Meet the Designers” webinars that were part of the “Native Garden Design” project provide excellent advice on how to co-exist with neighborhood regulations and norms. To learn just how successful this program has been read the story on Page 37.

Wild Ones members tolerate some damage caused by insects and teach others what this means and that it is a good sign. The winds of change are ablowin’. During Earth Week, I attended a NCRS webinar on beneficial and pest insects of urban forests and the presenter offered up that some leaf damage should be tolerated. Success! While many of us have assiduously attended Doug Tallamy’s presentations and read every one of his books, his message regarding the importance of insects to local ecosystems needs to rebound throughout the greater horticultural ecosystem of foresters, homeowners and landscaping professionals.

I want you to know what you do, no matter how small, is not nothing. What you do will make a difference.



Sally Wencil



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

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

Wild Ones’ definition of a native plant:

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

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GRASSES: ROOTING FOR THE UNDERDOG

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Aside from ecological restoration projects, grasses are often overlooked in landscaping designs. A few decades ago, massed plantings of grasses became a cutting edge trend in institutional design. These large groupings can be stunning and are sure to elicit a visceral sense of grandeur and awe.

However, native grasses are too often ignored in most projects whereas they should play a dominant role. Designing a pollinator garden should start with a matrix of grasses that will set the overall tone and a visual rhythm into which flowering forbs should be woven. This will also ensure four seasons of interest and that our beloved pollinating insects will have the shelter they require to overwinter.

From a practical point of view, grasses are excellent weed suppressants and are low maintenance. Most are warm season species, so if you are itching to play in the dirt during the dog days of summer but are worried about planting forbs and herbs in the heat, plant some native grasses. They will thrive under these conditions and establish at a time when few other types of plants can.



Mass planting of *Sporobolus heterolepis* (prairie dropseed)



NEWS

ACROSS THE NATION

CALIFORNIA

A Stanford-led [study](#) illuminates secrets of the North Pacific loggerhead turtle's epic migration between their birthplace on the beaches of Japan and re-emergence years later in foraging grounds off the coast of Baja California.

The study, published April 8 in *Frontiers in Marine Science*, provides evidence for intermittent passages of warm water that allow sea turtles to cross otherwise inhospitably cold ocean barriers, according to the [Stanford Science Digest](#). The findings could help inform the design of conservation measures to protect sea turtles and other migratory sea creatures amid climatic changes that are altering their movements.

MAINE and WASHINGTON

Republican U.S. Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, along with Democrat Maria Cantwell of Washington, have introduced a proposal to promote the use of native plants on federal lands.

According to [Maine Public Radio](#), the Native Plant Species Pilot Program Act would create a program at the National Park Service to support the use of native plants, and would direct the Park Service to review existing data and study the cost-effectiveness of using native plants.

Collins said the new program would encourage protection of blueberry barrens, native trees and wildflowers and help prevent the spread of invasive species. Similar legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives.

PENNSYLVANIA

An initiative to protect monarch butterflies, bumblebees and other insect pollinators will funnel nearly \$200,000 to regional projects undertaken by the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, based in Fox Chapel.

According to the [Pittsburgh Post Gazette](#), the two grants are part of \$1.7 million from the National Fish

and Wildlife Foundation and \$5 million total in public and private funding in 11 states to increase the quality and quantity of more than 32,000 acres of pollinator habitats for monarch butterflies, rusty patched bumblebees and other native pollinators.

Nationwide, the money will be used to collect hundreds of pounds of milkweed seeds, plant 19,000 milkweed seedlings and raise public awareness with workshops and meetings focused on pollinator conservation. Besides Pennsylvania, the grants will benefit pollinators in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin.

WISCONSIN

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources announced that new populations of some of the state's rarest plants, including orchids and milkweeds, were among the discoveries made by trained volunteers for the department's Rare Plant Monitoring Program.

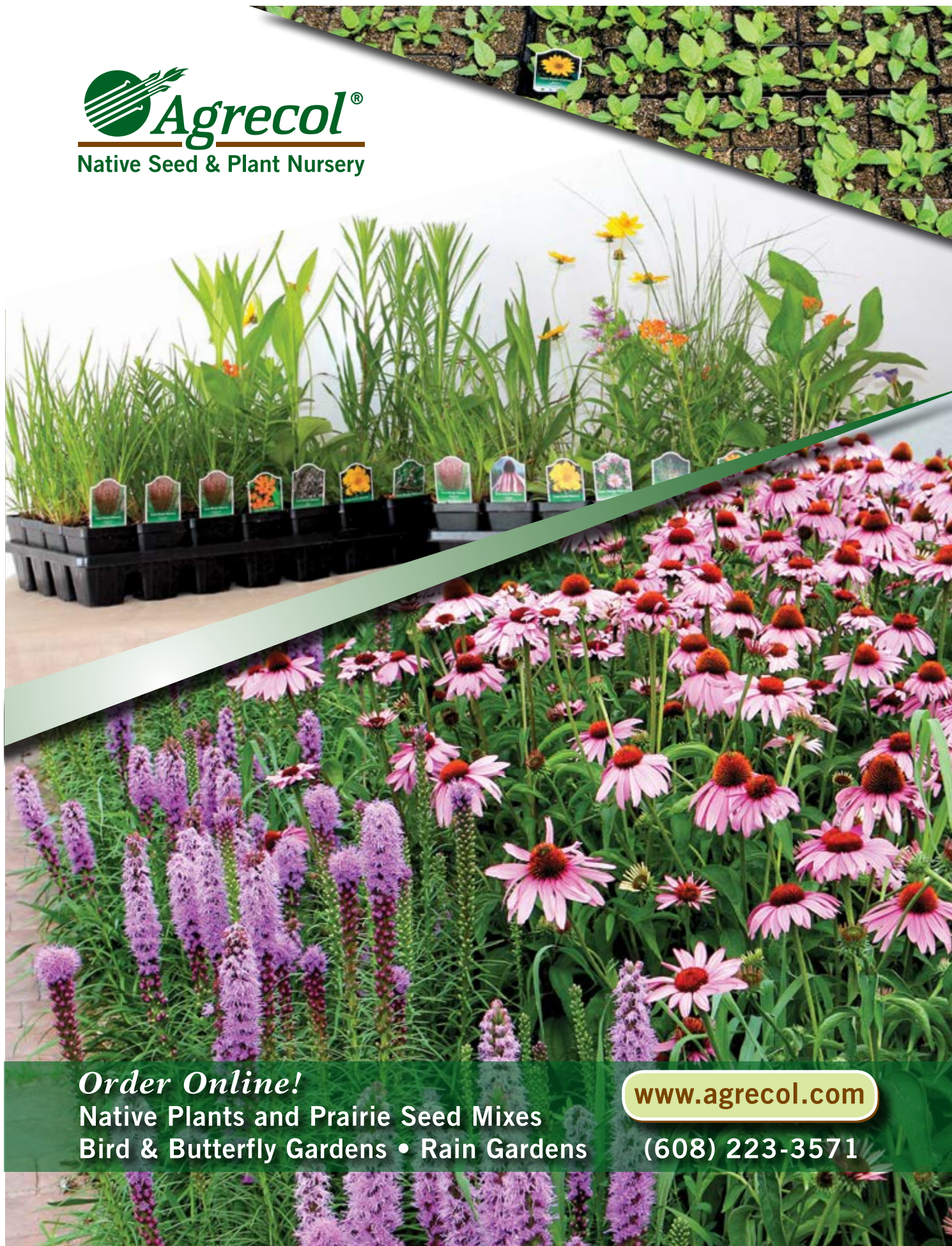
Their discoveries are featured in the program's recently released 2020 [annual report](#) and include:

- A new population of calypso orchid, a state threatened plant, found in a white cedar swamp near Crandon. Fewer than five calypso populations remain in Wisconsin, and dozens of surveys in recent years for the plant had failed to find any.
- The return of the federally threatened eastern prairie white fringed orchid to a site where it had not been seen in six years despite annual surveys.
- New populations of the state's endangered purple milkweed were found in Kenosha County and at two other sites in western Wisconsin.

More than 14% of Wisconsin's 2,366 native plant species are considered rare, meaning they are listed as endangered, threatened or special concern.



New populations of some of Wisconsin's rarest plants, including this calypso orchid, were among the discoveries made by trained volunteers for the Department of Natural Resources' Rare Plant Monitoring Program.



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Member Garden

Dan Carter

Kettle Moraine (Wisconsin) Chapter

All photos courtesy
Dan Carter

Editor's Note: We'd like to feature member's native gardens, large or small, in upcoming issues. If you're interested in sharing your native garden, send four to six high-resolution photos, as well as a brief description, to journal@wildones.org. Please include your contact information so we can follow up.

Dan Carter's passion for native plants and natural communities like prairies started in high school. But it has continued to grow and spread, just like the hundreds and hundreds of native plants in his yard.

With a Ph.D. in biology from Kansas State University, Carter is a conservation and restoration ecologist. "I see sick land everywhere, so my garden is an opportunity to create a reprieve. I don't understand how anyone who has seen a high quality remnant prairie, oak savanna or old growth forest wouldn't be moved and inspired to do what they can at home," he said.

To those who know him well, it was no surprise that when he, his partner and their two children moved into their home in Dousman, Wisconsin in 2014, Carter immediately started to work on the landscaping. He tore out the yew hedge in front of the house and started the process of converting existing beds, lawn and invasive-dominated peripheral areas to native plants.

Carter said he created his garden paradise a little bit at a time over five years, methodically killing sod and planting natives.

"My system essentially involves killing turf, planting native sedges, bunchgrass or forbs that are low

growing and spread, and placing other native species in-between without the use of mulch," he said. The vegetation quickly filled the space, and the result functions much like a prairie or the herbaceous layer in a healthy woodland.

Once the first areas were established, he was able to divide and transplant seedlings throughout the rest of their property. He also started many of his own plants from seeds, either under lights or planted in rows in nursery beds, and later moved them into the garden.

"I garden on a principal of no beds and borders, which I think

Dan and Beth's son Carl investigates blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*) seed pods while sitting on a clump of prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*).

create divides between people and the flora and fauna in their gardens," Carter said. "Our more intensively used lawn area instead transitions into taller native vegetation, and there is generally no clear dividing line. I want my children to get into the garden and find flowers, insects and tree frogs."

Carter said his favorite native plants are sedges, and he grows more than 40 species. His favorite, perhaps, is long-stalked sedge (*Carex*



About the Yard

- The half-acre subdivision lot in Dousman, Wisconsin — located about 40 miles west of Milwaukee — is home to about 525 plant species that are native to the prairies, savannas and woodlands of eastern North America between the Great Plains and Appalachian Mountains. Those represent 99% of the vegetation growing outside of their vegetable garden.
- In their vegetable garden, Carter has introduced the native annual redwhisker clammyweed (*Polanisia dodecandra*) as a native “cover crop” to fill open spaces. He also uses the vegetable garden area for native plant propagation.
- The property includes a small lawn area in the most intensively used area, but even that is 100% North American species, such as buffalo grass, poverty oat grass, sedges, ragworts, cat’s foot and others.
- In 2017, the property was part of a tour by the Kettle Moraine Chapter of Wild Ones.
- The property is a certified pollinator habitat, Monarch Waystation and Wild Ones native plant butterfly garden.

pedunculata), which is a clumping and evergreen woodland species. It flowers very early in the spring and it is unique among sedges in producing an oily elaiosome with its seeds that serves as a reward for the ants that assist it with dispersal.

“There are sedges that thrive in all community types, moisture levels and soils,” he said. “The variety of form in their foliage and fruiting structures provide complexity and beauty.”

Carter said most of what he grows is native to Wisconsin, but he worries less about geographical boundaries than he does the shared coevolutionary history that fosters ecological interactions.

Since the present climate in his location is about that which occurred a couple hundred miles to the south in the mid 1800s, Carter also grows a number of species whose northern pre-European range limits were to the south, but which occur in woodlands, savannas and prairies.

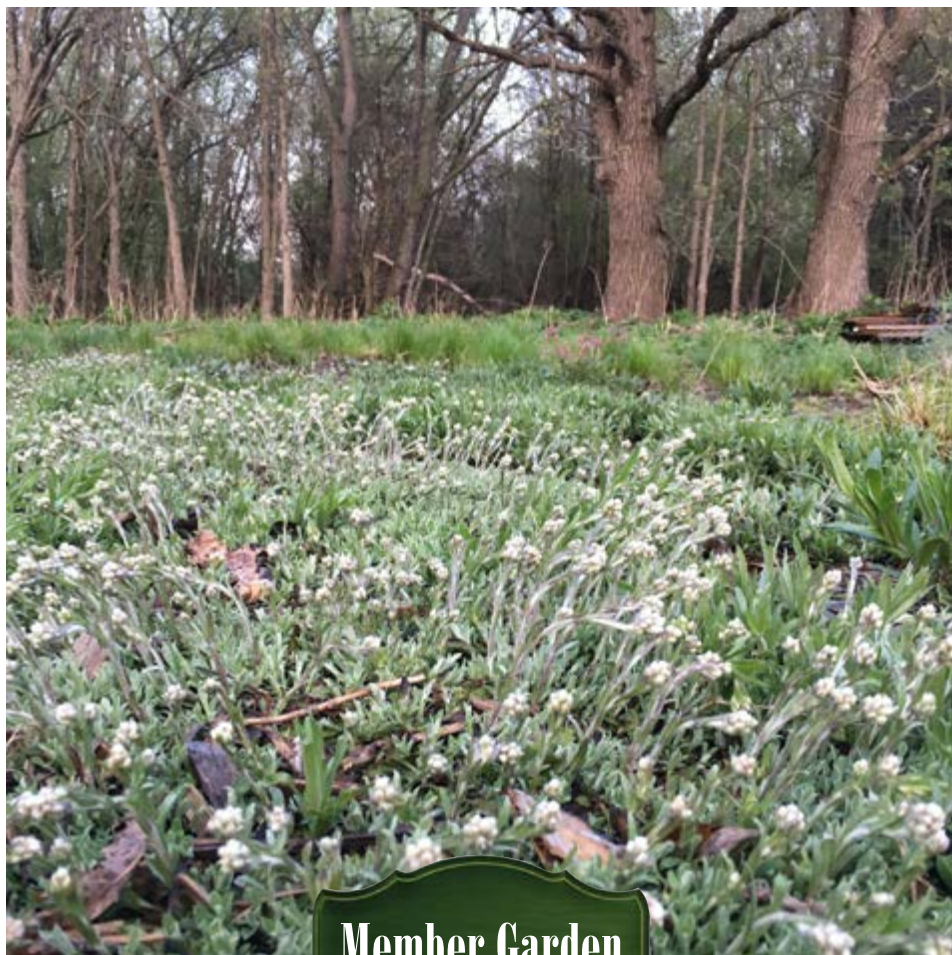


Above: Gray Tree Frog on leaf of common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*). Below: Giant swallowtail caterpillar on hoptree (*Ptelea trifoliata*).

“One benefit of this is that it extends the season in which floral resources are available,” Carter said. “For example, our latest Wisconsin native aster is aromatic aster (*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*), but I also grow turbinate aster (*Symphyotrichum turbinellum*), which extends the bloom window by a week or two in autumn and continues to be visited by bumblebees during that time. Our native consumers of aster foliage like the brown-hooded owlet moth (*Cucullia convexipennis*) also feed on it.”

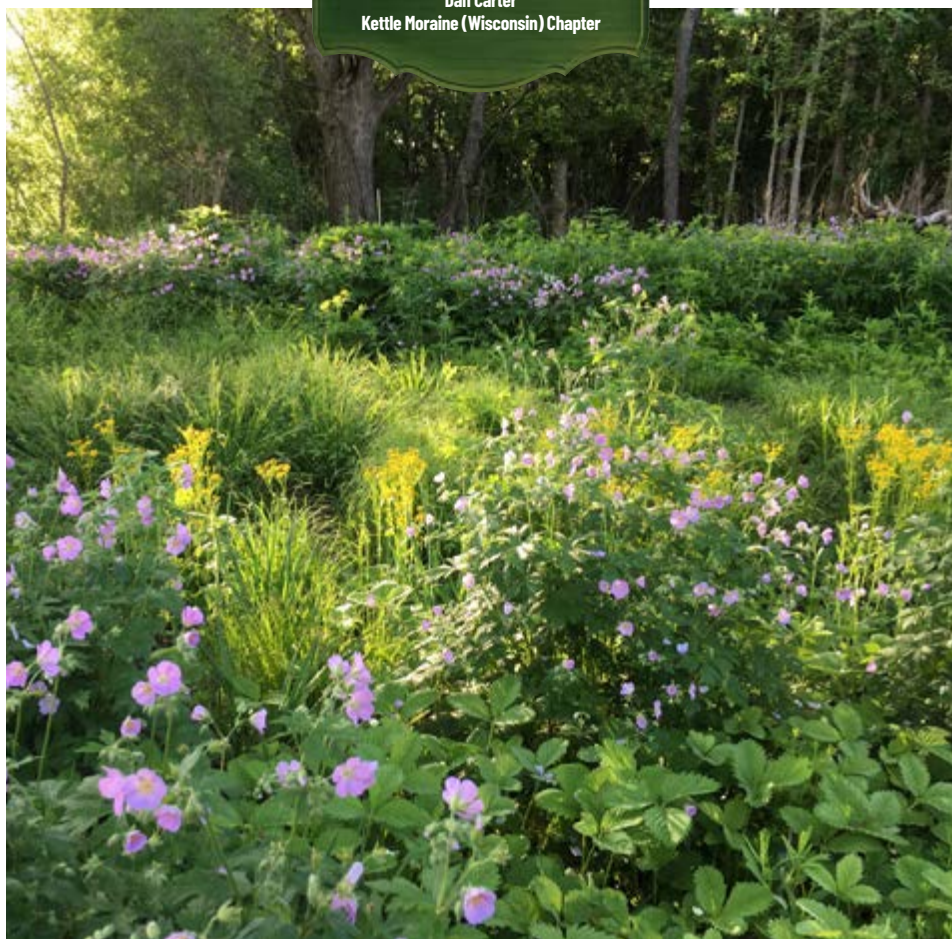
Carter said one of the unique features in his yard is the native lawn, which is comprised of North American species including poverty oat grass (*Danthonia spicata*), buffalo grass (*Bouteloua dactyloides*), ragworts (*Packera* spp.), pussytoes (*Antennaria* spp.) and sedges (*Carex* spp.).





Member Garden

Dan Carter
Kettle Moraine (Wisconsin) Chapter



"I'm at the point where maintenance is low and can be accomplished on casual walks through the garden, but as seed collection and plant division allows, I'm working to increase the presence of species I like, particularly early flowering ones like wood betony (*Pedicularis canadensis*) and midland shooting star (*Primula meadia*)," he said.

Not surprisingly, their yard is home to many pollinators, birds and other animals.

"Last year I documented a northern golden bumblebee (*Bombus fervidus*) visiting cream and blue false indigo (*Baptisia bracteata* and *Baptisia australis* var. *minor*) respectively," he said, noting that his neighbors call their home the "butterfly house" since monarchs and other butterflies are common visitors.

"Our yard is also used by at least seven species of reptiles and amphibians," he said. "Our avian highlight so far was a whip-poor-will (*Antrostomus vociferus*) that hung around for a few days during spring migration a few years back, and it treated us to a call that once was common, but is now very rare."

While a major goal of the garden is to attract wildlife, Carter also believes that native plants have intrinsic value and are worthy of our conservation efforts regardless of their direct or measurable benefits to wildlife or humankind. He adds that most have undergone declines of 95% or more in their natural populations over the last couple hundred years.

Carter is active in the Kettle Moraine Chapter of Wild Ones. Besides hosting a yard tour for members, he has presented programs to the chapter, as well as the Milwaukee North, Menomonee River Area and Milwaukee Southwest Wehr chapters of Wild Ones.

Check out his blog at <https://prairiebotanist.com/background/>.

Above: An area dominated by pussytoes (*Antennaria parlinii*, *A. plantaginifolia*, and *A. neglecta*). Left: A mowed lawn of buffalo grass (*Bouteloua dactyloides*, left) and early native wildflowers transitions into taller native woodland and savanna vegetation (right) with no defined beds or borders.

Seeds for Education Grant



Above: Native plants are already well established in the finished garden. Inset top: Summit students put cardboard in place to kill the grass and ready their garden for planting. Inset bottom: Summit Girl Scouts use their artistic ability to create signs that identify each plant by its common and scientific name.

Summit Preparatory School in Springfield, Missouri is home to a new pollinator garden designed by its middle school students, thanks to a \$500 Wild Ones Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education Grant.

In their first-year report, Project Coordinator Dana Thomas wrote that students were able to prepare the beds in early 2020, but weren't able to do the actual planting as COVID-19 caused the school to close. However, 14 volunteers, including staff, board members and families of the school, installed the plants from May 10-June 17.

"We had the help of wonderful volunteers who made sure everything was successfully planted and watered," Thomas said. "The garden is thriving and students will continue to be involved as we maintain and improve the garden moving forward."

To date, the students were most excited over the discovery of about 10 monarch butterfly larvae on the

swamp milkweed, and teachers used the opportunity for education.

The entire \$500 grant was spent on native plants purchased from the Ozark Soul Native Plant Nursery.

Summit is holding monthly volunteer workdays to control weeds, add signage and seating, and more. For example, the school's Girl Scouts will place plant labels they created to identify plants by their common and scientific names and Boy Scouts will install a bluebird house.

Thomas said they held an All School Service Day on April 22, and were able to engage students who planted additional natives to fill in bare areas and help shade out weeds, as well as pulled out weeds already growing.

"Plants already appear well-established, but will be watered during dry spells," Thomas said. They also created a Friends of the Summit Garden Club to help with weeding and other maintenance, as well as

reached out to the local Missouri Master Naturalist group about the possibility of partnering with them to help with weeding.

The Boy Scouts also created "tree cookie" paths through the garden to encourage children to explore the garden up close and personal. Thomas said, "We hope to also add seating for an outdoor classroom and perhaps hammocks to create an inviting play area."

Thomas had advice for other groups or schools planning native gardens.

"First, destroy all weeds completely before planting, especially Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*)," she said. "And secondly, be sure you have a plan in place for continued weed control and watering, such as a club."

Their Friends of the Summit Garden Club offers monthly workdays and allows volunteers to come weed freely on their own schedule.



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Removing unwanted plant growth

By Jim Mahurin

I've been involved in three separate native plant projects since 2009. On each site we had problems as to the proper handling of unwanted nonnative species that sprouted following installation of native plants, or regrowth of invasive species in a newly cleared area. One site was allowed to accumulate far, far too much unwanted growth of invasive species and the problems increased year after year.

The first site was an open slope area where native grasses were planted on church grounds to address a severe water runoff problem. The site had more than 1-acre of native grasses and flowers. The second site was a small lot at our home. The third was a nicely wooded 1-acre site where our homeowners association had removed tons of invasive undergrowth beneath nicely canopied hardwood trees. At each site we experienced growth of unwanted invasive species and the task of removal. But in 2019, I discovered an easier way to perform the task.

There is a steep learning curve with native plants. What do you plant? How are they to be placed? What species are most compatible with your region? What is most compatible in your neighborhood? What is most compatible in your garden? The native plants are placed on grounds long used for nonnative species. Plants growing on the site re-emerge each spring. Unwanted seeds blow into our garden and sprout. How do we rid ourselves of unwanted species, especially since burning is not an option in many places.

I was fortunate to hear landscape designer Larry Weaner speak at two different conferences. Larry worked with Thomas Christopher to produce a wonderful book titled *"Garden*



Top: An open area on the rear of a church grounds with spring growth of bluestem and Indian grass. You will notice the open space between the clumps, which allow you to identify unwanted species and clip them out easily. Bottom: Small clusters of blackberry briers and an Eurasian thistle. The briers are native, and have a tendency to grow in large clusters and overwhelm grasses. Jim Mahurin recommends removing the more dense concentrations of briers and Eurasian thistle by simply clipping them off at ground level. Holding a weed eater at 90 degrees one can remove a single plant without harming the surrounding desirable plants.



Pond before, above left: Before the work begins: Before we started work in early spring 2019, you would have found a dense collection of privet, Japanese honeysuckle, autumn olive, oriental bittersweet and a brier we couldn't identify near this pond, which was part of a homeowners association. The invasive material extended 30 to 40 feet from the water's edge. Pond work in progress, above right: About 12 to 15 volunteers worked in tandem to remove tons of material. Pond after, right: Two years later, in May 2021, this area is looking a lot different! Mahurin said the second and third spring involved setting out native understory plants in the areas previously consumed by invasive species. While they still work to keep the invasive re-growth at bay by nipping sprouting invasive growth, today the task requires little time.



Revolution: How Our Landscapes Can Be A Source of Environmental Change. Under the Index heading of "weed control," there are multiple references addressing this problem. Allow me to share how I used different approaches in different sites under different conditions.

The 1-plus acre site on the church grounds was predominantly big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardi*) and Indian grass (*Sorghastrum Nutans*) installed to alleviate a water runoff problem. After several years

about 15 species of native flowers were added to the site. It was highly effective in alleviating the water runoff problem. But after 10 years, we had dense patches of briers, weeds and shrubs in need of removal. The site had been mowed in December, and one spring I undertook the task of addressing 10 years of accumulated unwanted growth.

The recommended approach is to not chop or pull the unwanted species, but cut the plant even with the ground. Chopping or pulling

disturbs the soil and creates a perfect environment for rapid seed growth. Cutting the offending plant, even with the ground, depletes the root over time. By cutting an unwanted plant even with the ground, desirable plants can then cover the offending plant root and snuff it out.

I learned to rotate a weed eater 90 degrees and clip off a single plant. The task can also be performed with pruners or shears. With a little practice, I rarely damaged or cut desirable plants. Working in



early spring, new growth is soft and the job was easy. I was pleasantly surprised to come back a couple of weeks later and discover a majority of the cut sprouts had not regrown. The second trip across the tract was much quicker. The third trip required even less work. Our desirable native grasses that had been suppressed by dense brier and weed patches were now re-growing.

I used the same approach on our Homeowners Association grounds. This area is a nicely canopied hardwood site around a retention pond that had been neglected for 30 years. The understory became overgrown by invasive species, and the area had a dense 20-30 foot expanse of privet, Japanese honeysuckle, autumn olive, Mahonia and Oriental bittersweet too dense to walk through. We had removed four mature hardwoods that had died from the top down. At that time, we didn't know what had caused their deaths, but we now know Oriental bittersweet vines kill trees from the top down.

As we worked our way through this mass of unwanted growth, we discovered about 30 hardwood trees heavily infested with Oriental bittersweet vines with dead branches in their tops. Another 30 trees had small Oriental bittersweet vines growing into their crown, but not causing damage. But unaddressed, the long-term potential for damage

was enormous.

Groups of volunteers worked for two years cleaning out the invasive material. Japanese honeysuckle, privet, autumn olive, and Oriental bittersweet are very fast growing and sprouts emerged quickly. Without immediate attention, we would be back in the same condition within a very short period of time. Again, I took the weed eater and rotated it 90 degrees and snipped off the new shoots. I waited a few weeks for new growth to emerge and returned to find fewer plants. The new growth was snipped off even with the ground.

The woods floor was different from the grass area. Removing unwanted plants in the native grass area I saw the grasses returning where unwanted species had dominated. In the wooded area, we didn't have dominant desirable plants crowding out new invasive plant growth. It's been a process of snipping off new growth in an effort to deplete the roots. Each trip into the wooded area results in less invasive growth the next trip. We are also planting desirable native understory shrubs and trees beneath the mature canopy to take the place of the undesirable invasive species we worked so hard to remove. But preventing return of the invasive species will be a permanent task.

On a smaller scale, we have

Left: Briers and Eurasian thistle. Mahurin uses the *Picture This* app on his phone for identification when there is a question if the particular plant is wanted or not. Right: Spring is the perfect time of the year to remove plants you don't want.

more than 50 species of native plants in our small lawn. Clusters in different areas allow a mix of full sun, part shade, shade, etc. Our beds are 3- or 4-feet wide so one can sit on the edge and gently snip unwanted grasses or weeds. The plants are placed so there is little room for unwanted growth, so the task requires very little time. This allows us to have blooming plants in our yard from March, such as Carolina Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*), through early November, such as New England aster (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*). We typically have 5-10 native species in bloom most of the growing season.

As I write, we have blooming crossvine hanging from a river birch tree, Golden alexander in the shade, purple phlox and common fleabane in bloom, and a mass of white phlox about to explode in bloom. Several shades of baptisia started blooming within the last few days. Our lawn and trees are filled with birds and evidence of life is abundant. We have a few weeds, but not too many.

Jim Mahurin is a Wild Ones member from Franklin, Tennessee.



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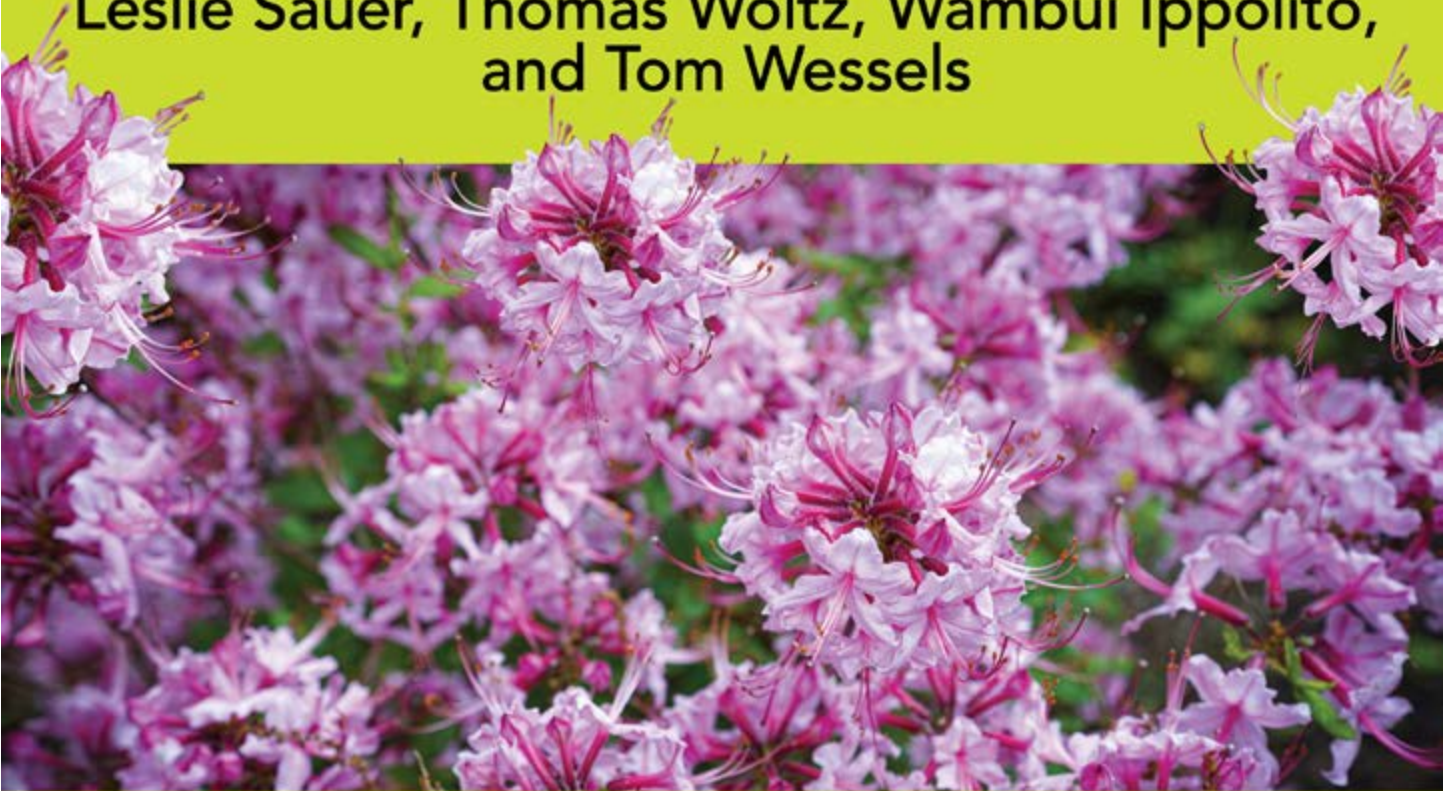
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All photos courtesy Jan Roehl

Mental health benefits of nature

By Jan Roehl

We have all experienced the stress and strain of being isolated and missing important milestones in our lives during the pandemic. The uncertainty of how much longer this will all last, and not being able to plan ahead, puts a strain on all of us and our families. In order to cope with all of this, more and more research suggests that spending time in nature and the outdoors can help individuals reduce stress, anxiety and depression.

Whenever we experience stress, our bodies produce a hormone called cortisol. This built-in alarm system triggers our “fight or flight” instinct in a crisis. Cortisol increases your heart rate, blood pressure and

your blood sugar to prepare your body to fight. What happens when you are constantly under pressure or fearful? It causes anxiety and depression, interrupts sleep cycles and it can cause weight gain. So what can you do to get relief?

Get outside in nature! In numerous studies, researchers have found that there is a correlation between spending time in nature and improved mental health. A study in the Netherlands subjected participants to a stress-inducing activity and then they measured their cortisol levels. The participants then either read or gardened. After 30 minutes, they measured their cortisol levels again. While both activities decreased participants’ cortisol levels, the decrease was significantly stronger for the gar-

deners. This suggests that gardening can reduce the physiological effects of stress.

On a personal note, gardening is one of my favorite hobbies. I can spend hours in my backyard working in my native gardens and watching the butterflies and birds. But did you know that digging in the soil and touching the dirt with your hands may actually produce a chemical reaction in your body that gives you a feeling of well-being? Scientists have isolated a microbe in soil called *Mycobacterium vaccae*. This bacterium mirrors the effect that Prozac has on neurons. Prozac is a medication that when taken gives you a feeling of

Top: Wild geraniums (*Geranium maculatum*), an early blooming native flower, line a forest floor.

happiness. Maybe there is some truth to the phrase “happy gardener.”

Participating in activities such as gardening, visiting parks or preserves and taking environmental classes is important to children’s development, too. Studies have shown that if children aren’t exposed to the outdoors at a young age, they are less likely to have an interest in nature when they are adults. Exposure to the outdoors has a strong, positive influence on a child’s attitude toward nature as an adult, so get your children or grandchildren outside.

Perhaps you or your children don’t like working in your yard; that’s OK. But you can still gain the benefits of being in nature by taking a walk in a park, forest preserve or along the beach. The Japanese have developed a term for immersing yourself in nature called “shin-rin-yoku.” It literally means “forest bathing.” This doesn’t mean removing any articles of clothing. What it does refer to is the immersion of oneself in nature and mindfully paying attention to your senses. These walks are meant to encourage you to slow down and take in what you see, hear and feel. Listen to the twittering of the birds, feel the gentle breeze on your skin, smell the aroma of the moist, damp forest vegetation, or touch the bark of a tree. As you breathe in the forest air, you are inhaling organic compounds given off by the plants called phytoncides. These organic compounds have been found to boost our immune system by increasing our natural killer cells and improving our cardiovascular and respiratory systems.

However, if you can’t get outside, don’t worry. Studies show that looking at scenes of nature or having houseplants can even reduce some stress levels.

Nature has long been used in cultures around the world as a form of healing and a way to foster good health. Research demonstrates that contact with nature benefits people of all ages and can positively impact



Above: The beauty of a swallowtail butterfly should make you smile, even if you’re having a bad day.
Below: Grossbeak



health, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s publications, “Heart diseases and stroke prevention: Addressing the nation’s leading killers” and “Diabetes successes and opportunities for population-based prevention and control.” Access to nature has been related to better health, greater physical and mental well-being, restoration from stress and a greater social connectivity.

People are instinctively predisposed to want to spend time in

nature rather than in urban environments, even though over half of our population live in an urban setting. The term “biophilia” was a term developed by E.O. Wilson who was a Harvard professor of biology. Biophilia is the love of nature and living things and it is an essential part of human nature. We have an innate affinity toward nature. There is a reason we feel better when we are outside. Whenever my children didn’t feel well, I would tell them to go outside in the backyard so they



When you are feeling stressed or anxious, take a step outside in your backyard and absorb what you see, hear and feel. And you may get lucky and see a ruby throated hummingbird.

In another research project, Robert Ulrich conducted a study on patients who had gallbladder surgery. Half of the patients had a view of leafy, green trees, while the other half had a view of the hospital room walls. The patients with a view of the trees needed less pain medication, had fewer complications, and left the hospital, on average, a day earlier. Ulrich did another study with his students. They were shown a disturbing movie about workplace accidents. Then half of the students took a walk in the city and the other half went to a park. The students who went to a park felt friendlier and happier, and they had lower heart rates and blood pressure. The students who went to the city were sad, angry and aggressive.

Part of this relates to the fact that when you are in a city, your brain is on constant alert to what is around you. There are car horns, lots of people and noise bombarding your senses. Also, the sharp angles of the buildings and the constant motion around you increases your eye movement. This, in turn, puts more stress on your brain. Compare that to when you walk in nature. The smooth edges of plants have a calming effect on the brain and the blues and greens of nature are actually soothing to the brain.

As little as 5 minutes in a natural setting, whether in a garden or in a backyard, improves self-esteem and motivation. So take a slow, deep breath, and inhale the fresh, outdoor air and fragrances, feel the temperature and the sun on your skin, listen to the songbirds, and observe the textures of the plants. Take an inventory of your body, relax, remove any mind clutter, and enjoy the moment. Enjoy nature! You deserve it.

Jan Roehll is the DuPage County program director in Naperville, Illinois.

would feel better. We are becoming an indoor species, but we are Homo sapiens/primates that should spend more time outdoors.

While spending more time indoors, we are also more sedentary. There is a term being used loosely called "sitting disease." While not a technical medical disorder, it is a condition that has increased concerns of medical experts. On average, Americans spend approximately 12 hours a day sitting whether it is in front of a television, computer, video games or driving. Health care professionals are saying that it is almost as detrimental to our health as smoking. As we sit more, it leads to weight gain, high blood pressure and heart disease. This takes a toll on us, physically and mentally. Doctors are seeing more children with weight issues and they are developing high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes. Health care professionals are saying that one in seven children are considered obese. The problem then becomes if you have obese children, they are likely to be obese as adults, too.

We always took our children to

parks to play and hike. However, a study by Yale University, conducted in 2017, titled "*The Nature of Americans Disconnection and Recommendations for Reconnection*," found that children and adults think of outdoor experiences differently. It discovered that when adults thought of their favorite outdoor experiences, they described a trip to a national park or the beach. To them it meant going on an excursion to a far away, well-known destination. But children said their favorite outdoor experiences were playing in their backyard, especially if it was with their friends.

So the next time you are feeling stressed or anxious, take a lesson from children: step outside in your backyard and absorb what you see, hear and feel. You don't have to go far. Give your brain a break from stress. A Finnish study recommends getting out in nature 5 hours a month. That is approximately 30 minutes two times per week or 17 minutes a day. This was also corroborated in a study done by the University of Michigan. A 15-minute walk each day is like a nature nap. It reduces stress, anxiety and improves your concentration.

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June 21-27

National Pollinator Week

JULY

July 1 – Aug. 31

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July 11

National Cheer Up the Lonely Day

How about taking someone a bouquet of native flowers from your garden?

July 22

National Hammock Day

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AUGUST

National Water Quality Month

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Aug. 17

National Nonprofit Day

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Aug. 21

Wild Ones Annual Meeting

Webinar format. Stay tuned for details.

OCTOBER

Oct. 5

Webinar with Wild Ones Lifetime Honorary Director Douglas Tallamy

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Backyard prairie mothapalooza

By Cindy Crosby

Last year during [National Moth Week](#), Jeff and I put on a “mothapalooza” near our backyard prairie patch. I knew, as a prairie steward, that moths depend on specific associated plants for their caterpillars to survive and thrive. Would the native (and nonnative) plants in my backyard be enough of a draw to nurture a thriving moth population?

I didn’t know what moths were nearby, beyond the occasional grayish ones that banged away at our front porch light and a sighting of a [beautiful wood nymph](#) last summer that stuck around by the front door for a few days. Armed with a [Peterson’s Field Guide to Moths](#), we were about to find out.

As I read up on moths, I learned there are between 150,000 to 500,000 different species in the world. New moths are discovered all the time. While most are creatures of the night, some fly during the daytime. That made sense. I see the snowberry clearwing moths nectar at the Schulenberg Prairie’s bee balm blooms and the hummingbird moths nectar at my native bee balm — and not-so-native hanging basket of petunias.

But after dark was a mystery. Other than a few moths I had seen on my nocturnal front porch visits, what else might I discover? It was time to find out.

Two of our grandkids, 4 and 7, were spending the night with us. It seemed like the perfect opportunity to introduce them to moths. First, we built a moth trap. There are many



This orange wing moth was one of the first we saw.

good instructions for inexpensive moth traps online. [We adapted one from this video by a precious young British kid](#) — check it out. After watching it, we were able to pull a moth trap together mostly from odds and ends I had in the garage, and some donated egg cartons from a friend. The egg cartons are stacked inside the bucket for the moths to rest in, like rows of tiny cubicles.

The whole effect is not pretty, but as it turned out, it was functional.



“The night is more alive and more richly colored than the day.”

— Vincent Van Gogh

It is also catch and release, so the moths can return to the backyard in the morning.

We also painted a board with moth bait, a stinky concoction of brown sugar, stale beer and bananas. Some moths, it seems, like this better than lights.

[The UV light](#) was the most expensive part of the set-up, and was a birthday gift from Jeff who ordered it online. (Thanks, Jeff!) We decided to combine the moth trap and baited board with a moth sheet that we hung on the porch.

Waiting for it to be dark was made a little easier by setting up our backpacking tent and reading stories to the little ones.

Then, about the time the fireflies lit up, we began seeing moths.

Small ones, like an orange wing moth. Beautifully colored ones, like the woody underwing. Seriously cute

Tiger moths depend on dandelions and clover as host plants for its larvae.

ones, such as the giant eucosma. (Its host plant is cup plant and our prairie patch has plenty of it!)

From time to time, we'd leave the backyard and check the front porch to see what had shown up under the porch light. Most of our photos were taken with my cell phone. Even so, we could see how beautiful a little Venerable Dart moth was. Those fuzzy antennae! Those beautiful wings. We looked in the field guide and saw its host plants include chickweed and tomato plants. Yup! We have both.

Most moths show up a little later than bedtime for little ones. They didn't last past 10 p.m. After tucking them in, I kept things going outside until about 1 a.m., when I finally left the moth trap to work its magic and went to bed.

In the morning, still in our PJs, we rushed out to check the trap. Not a lot in there; mostly very tiny moths and a lot of night insects. I can see our moth trap is going to need some work. But one find at the bottom of the trap that wowed the grandkids: a harnessed tiger moth, nestled into one of the cups of an egg carton.

I've seen tiger moths on the prairies, but never in my backyard! I read in my *Peterson's Field Guide to Moths* that this species depends on dandelions and clovers as host plants for its larvae, or caterpillars. Another reason to not treat our yard with chemicals.

The four of us gently lifted the egg carton out of the bucket and watched as it flew into the gray-headed coneflowers.

Moth identification is tricky; I'm learning a lot from the Moths of the Eastern United States Facebook Page and my field guide. Buguide.net is also a terrific resource, and [iNaturalist](https://www.inaturalist.org/), a free app for my phone, did a lot of the legwork getting my moths identified — at least to genus. But like learning dragonflies or damselflies or any insect, the more you learn, the more you realize you don't know.



Such an exciting adventure—the realization that a lifetime will not be long enough to discover all there is about moths.

Each moth needs a particular plant or several specific plant species in order to survive. Every time I choose to put a host plant in my garden for moths — or leave a “weed” that they depend on for survival like clovers or dandelions — I increase the chances of a more healthy and diverse moth population in my little corner of the world.

The night is full of amazing creatures. Now, I've met a few more of them. Just think of what you might find in your backyard prairie patch or your favorite prairie ... after dark.

Cindy Crosby is the author or contributor to more than 20 books. Her most recent is “Chasing Dragonflies: A Natural, Cultural, and Personal History” (Northwestern University Press, 2020). This essay is from her weekly blog, “Tuesdays in the Tallgrass,” which can be found along with her programs, classes and books at www.cindycrosby.com.

Left top: The host plant of the giant eucosma is cup plant. Left middle: Woody Underwing. Below: Waiting for dark was made a little easier by setting up our backpacking tent and reading stories to the little ones.





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Remediating depleted soil for a residential native plant garden

By Scott A. Miskiel

Native plants help to improve soil health and, in the long run, even create new soil. To experience vibrant growth, though, they need to be planted within good soil.

If one tries to establish a native plant garden in soil that's depleted of nutrients, the resulting growth will be slow and ineffective. First, the soil must be actively remediated.

Aside from state and national parks and other lands dedicated to preservation, much of our lands have been stripped of their native vegetation, and the natural soil-building processes that created rich, healthy soil has been inhibited. Once ecologically pristine lands have been degraded, leaving us with 40 million acres of lawns and over 900 million acres of mono-cropped, chemical-drenched farmland. Robbed of their biodiversity, our once rich and verdant soils have been left depleted.

Transitioning from restoration agriculture to reverse soil degradation on our farms will require a drastic change in national policies, change which is beyond the ability of a single individual or family to affect. Furthermore, any large-scale attempts at remediation of large parcels will be daunting and expensive.

However, the individual efforts of private landowners can improve soil health and create oases of native plant gardens and mini forests in their own yards. In short, you have the ability to remediate soils on your own small plot and create a vibrant, healthy native plant garden or mini forest.

Several methods are available to deal with poor soils in your native plant garden:



Hugelkultur bed with wildflower planting at Los Angeles County Arboretum in Arcadia, California.

Raised beds and terracing

Where abundant, healthy soil is lacking, new soil can be hauled in to fill raised beds, and if the ground is sloped, it can be terraced to provide a level bed to impede erosion. The benefit of these methods is that they quickly provide a suitable plot for your native plants. However, these methods do incur the cost and labor of creating the beds or terraces and filling them with suitable soil.

A Hugelkultur mound

Hugelkultur is a method whereby mounds of compostable biomass such as decaying branches and leaf litter are covered with humus-rich soil upon which to plant, resulting in a planting bed that improves long-term soil fertility and moisture retention. The Hugelkultur mound can be whatever size and shape appropriate for its location and is often used on a sloped surface to

create a swale to slow the flow of water and cause it to be absorbed by the high organic content in the mound. Depending on the size of the Hugelkultur mound, you may or may not need excavation equipment. Also depending on the availability of partially decayed branches, logs, leaves and other organic matter, you may or may not need to acquire this from an outside source.

A Miyawaki Mini Forest

The Miyawaki method, pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki, is a system for accelerated restoration of forests, especially on degraded soils. This technique creates mini forests on areas as small as a few hundred square feet, by digging the planting area, mixing the removed materials with various forms of compost or humus, and returning it to the planting area. A biodiverse mix of native trees, shrubs, flowers and

groundcovers is densely planted, and the ground thickly mulched.

The method purportedly has quick results in native forests, up to 10 times faster than traditionally planted forests and 30 times denser. Various native species of plants are densely planted so that non-planted species are choked out, reducing maintenance. It typically requires watering and weeding for up to three years, then becomes maintenance free.

A key feature of the Miyawaki method is the extensive soil preparation that takes place prior to planting. The planting area is dug out to a depth of approximately two feet and the soil mixed with a variety of humus-rich mulches or composts. Fortified with corn, wheat or rice husks, cocoa coir and organic fertilizers such as manure, the growing medium is supercharged for accelerated growth. Rich in organic matter, the soil holds moisture better and encourages soil biodiversity.

A diverse assortment of native species is planted, with plants ranging from small shrubs to large trees. Planting is dense, with up to

five plants per square yard, and the ground is covered with a thick layer of mulch.

It is said that Miyawaki restored as many as 40 million trees in 1,300 forests using this method. There is perhaps no better exemplar for the Miyawaki method than Shubhen-du Sharma, who first implemented the system in his 800-square-foot back yard in Kashipur, India 10 years ago. After preparing the soil in accordance with the Miyawaki method, he planted over 200 trees and shrubs in this small space. In just a few years, he had a thriving mini forest habitat for a diversity of animal species. Impressed with the success of this system, Sharma established a company called "Afforestt" and has planted as many as 450,000 native trees in 144 mini forests.

The soil preparation feature of the Miyawaki Method is labor-intensive, requires excavation equipment and the acquisition of the organic matter. Therefore, it is very costly. However, for a small, backyard mini forest where such costs might otherwise be incurred for traditional landscaping, the Miyawaki Method is worth consideration.

A rain garden

A rain garden is a method used to reduce the flow rate of runoff, creating an area of enhanced moisture and providing a place for flora and fauna that require a more damp-like habitat than the immediately surrounding area.

One should not be discouraged by the lack of abundant, healthy soil at the site for his or her proposed native plant garden. The methods outlined above can help to quickly remediate the problem and ensure success.

Scott Miskiel has nearly 20 years of experience in organic gardening and permaculture. He has completed a Master Gardener course, a Permaculture Design Course, is a Master Naturalist and is currently the city gardener for Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Reprinted with permission from the summer 2020 Ozark Chapter newsletter.

Editor's Note: Prairie plants can often be planted in and will thrive in poor soils. However, woodland plants usually require richer soils. The remediating measures recommended in this article will be especially helpful for improving depleted soils in preparation for woodland restorations.



Calling all Wild Ones photographers!
Share the beauty of native plants and scenery by entering the 2021 Wild Ones Photo Contest. Photos can be submitted from July 1- Aug. 31.
Learn more and submit photos online at wildones.org/photocontest.

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Making good on our mission with native garden designs

By Katie Huebner

As a Wild Ones member, you know very well our organization's mission is centered on promoting environmentally sound landscaping practices. Carrying out our mission was our goal when we set out to create a native garden guide for first-time gardeners and to make available professional, native garden designs to fit a variety of gardening skillsets and budgets. We wanted to create resources that were free, practical and accessible to not only longtime native plant gardeners, but also to people who are brand new to the native gardening movement.

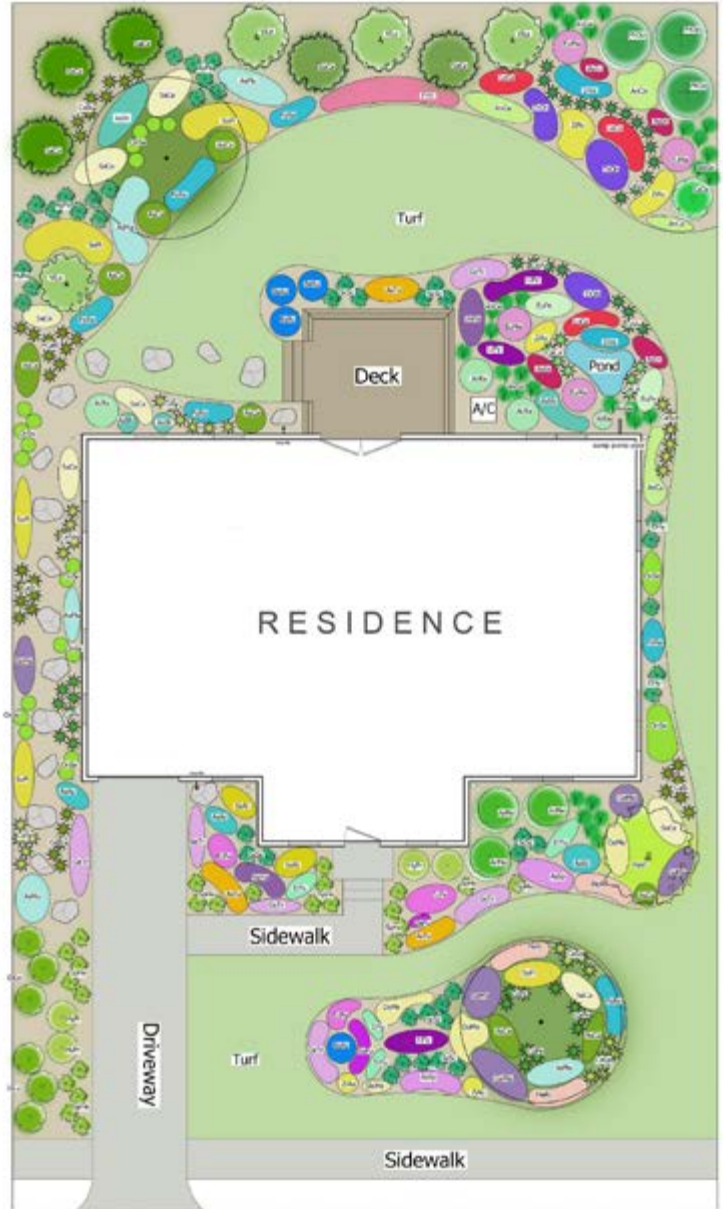
As you hopefully know already, today, these tools are a reality. In January 2021, we released a printed Native Garden Guide and seven native garden designs for Chattanooga, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Tallahassee and Toledo. Eighth and ninth designs will be forthcoming for Boston and Denver, respectively. We wanted to share with you, our biggest stakeholders, the results of these efforts.

Wild Ones National, together with our 60 chapters, promoted the seven completed designs to the public this spring through media outlets and our own marketing efforts. Media kits were shared with Wild Ones chapters, our partners and a number of additional like-minded organizations back in late January.

Many Wild Ones chapters and organizations used the tools in the kit to promote the designs on their websites, in e-blasts and on social media to their own contacts and followers.

Wild Ones National promoted the program by submitting press releases to more than 125 local media outlets in the regions where we have designs and also shared about the program through e-blasts and social media promotions. Highlights from the promotional campaign included:

- A native garden design introductory announcement e-blast was sent on Jan. 25, 2021 to 9,000 current and former Wild Ones members, native plant nurseries, like-minded organizations and non-member Wild Ones contacts. We achieved an open rate of almost 50% (4,219 opens) and a click rate of 48.6% (2,500 clicks). The average nonprofit email open rate is 21.6% and the average nonprofit click rate is 9.7%.
- Organic social media posts were shared with our combined 15,000 followers on our Facebook, Instagram,



Milwaukee native garden plan by Danielle Bell.

YouTube and Twitter accounts. More than 12 native plant Facebook groups received over 380 reactions/likes, 85 comments and 137 shares.

- The Toledo design preview video on our YouTube channel has received 2,400 views since Jan. 12, 2021.
- Paid Facebook advertising throughout the month of March in the seven ecoregions where we have designs reached 3,720 people, receiving nearly 440 likes and was shared 280 times!

- Articles about the designs were featured in several publications in Tennessee and Michigan, and the designer of the St. Louis plan was featured on public radio.

- Two “Meet the Designers” webinars in March and April had a total of 2,800 people register to attend, and combined, the event recordings have received 2,300 views on YouTube between March 10-April 29, 2021.

- We provided 10,000 printed Native Garden Guides to Wild Ones chapters to freely distribute to first-time gardeners and the content of the guide is available as web pages on the [Native Garden Design website](#).

These promotional efforts have translated to 20,800 unique visitors to the Native Garden Designs website and 6,650 unique downloads of the design pdfs by 4,410 unique visitors between Jan. 25 and April 29, 2021.

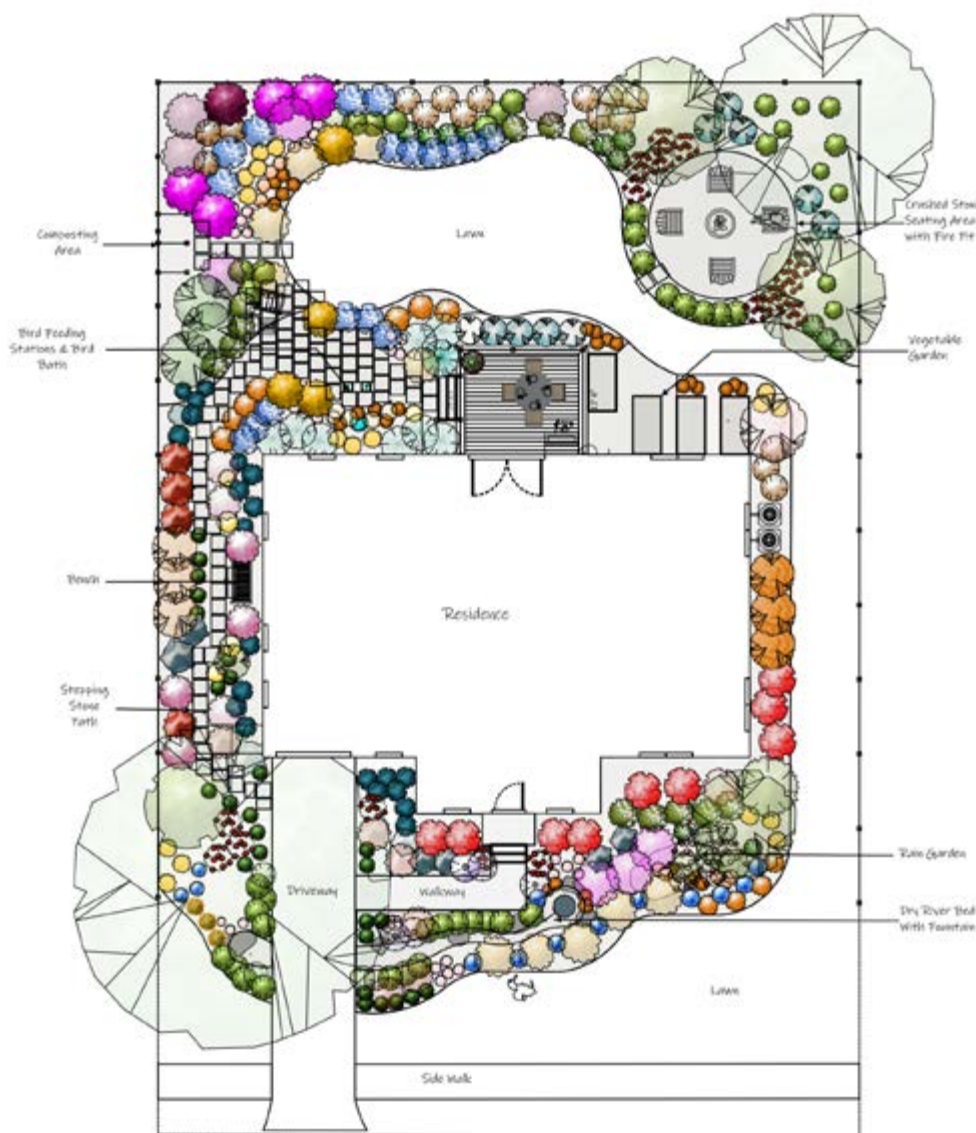
Wild Ones membership and inquiries about starting a chapter increased during the promotion period. New memberships grew by 193 in February, 251 in March and 219 in April. Last year, we opened four new seedlings the entire year. Already in the first quarter, six new seedlings have opened, and at least two more inquiries are currently being pursued. We have also received requests for designs from individuals in 12 additional cities.

The feedback on the designs has also been overwhelmingly positive. Here are a few of the comments we have received through social media and the Native Garden Designs website contact form.

Christopher wrote, “I am ready to commit to have someone give me the push to a planned garden with natives... Keep up the great work!”

Emily shared, “We are building a house, so I’ve been reviewing the Native Garden Design for Chicago (we’re in Central Illinois near Peoria) and am planning on using a lot of the designs for our landscaping. Thank you so much for doing this!”

Susan wrote, “What a beautiful way to help someone have some kind of idea of what a layout might look like! For people who have a hard time visualizing, you give them a way to imagine a way forward. I think that is 100% generous and brilliant to offer a FREE digital idea to those of us who have big dreams, but don’t know how to lay them out. Very helpful.”



Toledo native garden plan by Susan Hall.

These amazing tools and the reach they have achieved would not have been possible without gracious support provided by the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust. Wild Ones still has remaining grant funds, which will be used to cover future professional designer consultants and promotional costs for the two designs still in the pipeline.

If additional grant funding can be secured, Wild Ones plans to pursue growing the number of ecoregion specific garden designs we have available in the future.

We also greatly look forward in the coming years to sharing photos with you of gardens that have been developed using the designs and continuing to be an important resource and educational platform for gardeners of all budgets and skillsets to learn about the importance of native gardening, and how it can both help the environment and be beautiful.

In the meantime, we hope you celebrate with us the mission we have already achieved with these great resources.

Get to know Wild Ones' new board members

Wild Ones is thankful to have a strong, mission-focused national board of directors overseeing our organization. We recently welcomed six new members to our board. Learn more about each of these talented board members below.



Marty Arnold
Joined Wild
Ones: April 2016
Board Term:
2021-2022
Serves on: Gover-
nance committee

Contact: marnold@wildones.org
Chapter: River City-Grand Rapids
Area
Chapter Role: Immediate Past Presi-
dent
Favorite Native Plant: Blood-
root (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)

About:

Arnold is the immediate past presi-
dent of Wild Ones River City-Grand
Rapids Area Chapter. During her
tenure, the chapter completed its first
set of bylaws, a strategic plan, new
member orientation and member
garden "walkabouts." Her profes-
sional experience includes nonprofit
administration, communications,
fund development and volunteer
coordination.

What inspired you to become in- volved with Wild Ones:

"Some wonderful friends insisted I
join Wild Ones River City five or six
years ago and it has changed my life.
I have made more wonderful friends
who 'get' me and my love of every-
thing wild and outdoors."



J.D. Carlson
Joined Wild
Ones: October
2018
Board Term:
2021-2024
Serves on: Fi-

nance and Seeds for Education
committees
Contact: jdcarlson@wildones.org
Chapter: North Oakland
Favorite Native Plant: Eastern Hem-
lock (*Tsuga canadensis*)

About:

Carlson lives in Bloomfield Hills,
Michigan and is a 15-year employee
of Penske Automotive Group, where
he currently serves as chief financial
officer. He is a CPA who began his
career at PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

What inspired you to become in- volved with Wild Ones:

"Many years ago I was hunting for
an outdoor service project my young
Cub Scout pack could participate in
and came across a Michigan DNR
program about gathering native
seeds. The DNR officer gave a little
presentation to the scouts and ex-
plained that approximately 98% of
Michigan prairie had been converted
to farmland, which I found shocking.
I dragged my kids whenever I could
to related projects and it was on one
of these that I came across three
extremely motivated and knowledge-
able individuals who were happy
to engage me socially. They were,
of course, local Wild Ones chapter
members and introduced me to the
organization."



Eric Fuselier
Joined Wild
Ones: January
2020
Board Term:
2021-2024
Serves on: Gover-

nance committee
Contact: efuselier@wildones.org
Chapter: Ozark
Favorite Native Plant: Dwarf Crested
Iris (*Iris cristata*)

About:

Fuselier is an environmental proj-
ect manager at Crafton Tull, where
he conducts environmental impact
studies and works with civil engi-
neers and landscape architects to
select native plant species for the
rain gardens, bioswales, detention
ponds and commercial development
projects they design. He chartered
the Ozark Chapter in 2020, where
he also serves as chapter president.
The Fuseliers purchased an illegal
dumping ground in northern Arkan-
sas in 2014, and after cleaning it up
and building their cabin with help
from close friends and family, they
have been working to re-establish
native plants there.

What inspired you to become in- volved with Wild Ones:

"I live in a region that has experi-
enced rapid economic and popula-
tion growth in a very short amount
of time. Much of this growth has
brought development on a scale that
has replaced much of the native hab-
itat that had previously existed here
for centuries. I decided to charter the
Ozark chapter in an effort to mitigate
these impacts since I believe that
Wild Ones fills a definite need."

“Native plants are the Swiss Army Knife solution to so many issues, and more people need to hear that message.” — Carrie Radloff



Michele Hensey

Joined Wild Ones: January 2021
Board Term: 2021-2024
Serves on: Fi-

nance, Governance and Seeds for Education committees
Contact: mhensey@wildones.org
Chapter: Southeastern Pennsylvania
Favorite Native Plant: Common Ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*)

About:

Hensey lives in West Chester, Pennsylvania and recently retired after 35 years in the financial services and IT industry. She is active in her community and is currently studying ecological gardening. She is also the owner of a native plant design small business, as well as a seasonal employee of a local native plant nursery.

What inspired you to become involved with Wild Ones:

“I came across the Wild Ones national organization while searching for experienced resources and groups in the native plant landscaping space. I was drawn to their mission of education and planting native landscapes across the country.”



Holly Latteman

Joined Wild Ones: August 2019
Board Term: 2020-2022
Serves on: Grants

committee
Contact: hlatteman@wildones.org
Chapter: Columbus
Favorite Native Plant: Flaming Azalea (*Rhododendron calendulaceum*)

About:

Latteman received her bachelor's degree in zoology, sociology/anthropology and environmental studies from Ohio Wesleyan University in 2017, and her master's degree in environmental studies from Ohio University in 2019. She has a breadth of research experience: studying feather degrading bacteria on common yard birds, nest box species bacterial load and monitoring, including phenology monitoring of various taxa, black vulture range expansion and human wildlife conflict, and avian presence in prairie rights-of-way. She also serves as program chair for the Columbus chapter and is a conservation project manager at The Dawes Arboretum.

What inspired you to become involved with Wild Ones:

“I am inspired by the work of Wild Ones in our communities and the impact this has in our urban environments. I hope to bring my communications, research and community engagement background to the national organization to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.”



Carrie Radloff

Joined Wild Ones: February 2017
Board Term: 2021-2022
Serves on: Gover-

nance committee
Contact: cradloff@wildones.org
Chapter: Loess Hills

About:

Radloff, of Sioux City, Iowa, helped found the Loess Hill chapter in 2017. She chairs the Northwest Iowa Group of Sierra Club and serves as its delegate to the Iowa Chapter's Executive Committee. She's a current member and former chair of the Sioux City Environmental Advisory Board. Radloff also completed Leadership Siouxland and Climate Reality Project training, and is a Master Gardener and Master Conservationist. She enjoys connecting and coordinating ideas, information and people in order to achieve shared goals as efficiently as possible.

What inspired you to become involved with Wild Ones:

“In contrast to my other environmental work, Wild Ones focuses on one thing: getting more native plants into the ground. Native plants are the Swiss Army Knife solution to so many issues, and more people need to hear that message.”



Wild Ones and Two Thirds for the Birds unite to promote native landscaping

The staff and National Board of Directors of Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd. are thrilled to announce that Wild Ones National is now allied with Two Thirds for the Birds to promote the use of native plants in landscapes.

Two Thirds for the Birds is an initiative founded by Edwina von Gal, a renowned landscape designer, founder of the Perfect Earth Project, and longtime Wild Ones member. She has pioneered environmentally sensitive landscaping since 1984. Her clients and collaborators include many accomplished celebrities, such as Cindy Sherman, Ina Garten, Calvin Klein, Maya Lin and Frank Gehry.

Two Thirds' mission is to restore dwindling bird populations, which it advances by educating and encouraging gardeners and landscapers to use at least 70% native plants in their gardens while avoiding pesticides. These are perfectly aligned with Wild Ones' mission and activities, according to

Wild Ones National Board President Sally Wencel. "Alliances like those between Two Thirds and Wild Ones strengthen their conservation efforts and help spread the message of planting native," Wencel said.

Two Thirds has an illustrious group of advisers recruited by von Gal, including John Fitzpatrick, the executive director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Elijah Goodwin, ecological database coordinator for the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture; Carl Safina, founder of The Safina Center; Evan Abramson, principal with Landscape Interactions; and Doug Tallamy, University of Delaware professor, entomologist, author, and Wild Ones honorary director.

In addition, Two Thirds also has an impressive group of allies, again recruited by von Gal, including the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Native Land Trust, the Garden Conservancy, the Homegrown Na-

tional Park, the Sarafina Center, the Conway School, the Quogue Wildlife Refuge, the Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut, the Aspetuck Land Trust, the Pollinator Pathway Project, and the Perfect Earth Project.

"Wild Ones National is honored to be allied with Two Thirds, Two Thirds' amazing team of advisers, its other allies, and most of all, Edwina von Gal. This alliance will accelerate our goal to heal and save the earth, one yard at a time," said Wild Ones Executive Director Jennifer Ainsworth.

Wild Ones members can further increase the efforts of the alliance by adding their names to Two Thirds list of individual supporters. To do so, please visit Two Thirds website at www.234birds.org and click on The List.

To learn more about Wild Ones, go to www.wildones.org.

High school student awarded for short film

Lena Song, a student at Oakton High School, Vienna, Virginia, is the recipient of the 2021 One Earth Young Filmmakers Contest "Wild Ones Environmental Sponsorship Award" for her short film "A Home For Us All!"

You can watch Song's film on the Wild Ones YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/WildOnesNativePlants>.

Song's use of origami, stop motion and her conceptual design are technically brilliant and artistically gorgeous! Equally important, her film's story and message are positive, crystal clear and in alignment with Wild Ones' mission to promote the



use of native plants in landscapes.

Wild Ones is so very proud to present this award to Song for her deserving film! The award includes a \$400 prize. Only 10 prizes were awarded for this year's contest.

You can learn more about Song

in June when she sits down with Wild Ones board member Loris Damerow to chat about her motivation for making this film. Stay tuned!

Learn more about the One Earth Young Filmmakers Contest at <https://www.oneearthfilmfest.org/winners>.

'Good friend' of Wild Ones remembered

A former musician and journalist who became an advocate for native plants and started his own native landscaping company died on Jan. 11, 2021.

Donald Vorpahl, 87, of Appleton, Wisconsin, was an early member of Wild Ones and played an important part in the organization before it went national, recalled the first executive director of Wild Ones, Donna VanBuecken.

"He was about the only landscape designer that featured native plants," VanBuecken said. "His generosity in sharing what he had learned about the fledgling native landscaping movement was immensely helpful, and I shall always be grateful for his ready counseling."

VanBuecken said that when she first started to plan her prairie in 1986, she didn't know what she was doing.

"In fact, I'm not even certain I understood what a native plant was," she said. "I learned about the benefit/necessity of surveying my property from Don Vorpahl. He was a good friend of Wild Ones," she said, adding that he wrote "Planting a Woodland" in the Wild Ones book Landscaping With Native Plants.

Pat Brust of the Milwaukee Southwest Wehr chapter also remembers Vorpahl. "I attended a few lectures by him in the early 90s," she said. "He was an impressive source of knowledge and inspiration."

"Just his smile and quiet explanations helped Wild Ones (members) expand their knowledge and move forward," she said. "When Don would come to Milwaukee for Wild Ones we often would find ourselves sitting at the dining room table in Lorrie Otto's home. What a treat that was!"

And thanks to Vorpahl's recommendation, Brust has a Pagoda dog-



Donald Vorpahl

wood between her and her neighbors to the south. "We have the most gorgeous living memory of Don right in our very own backyard!"

Carol Chew said Vorpahl was thought of highly by all, and was one of the early speakers at their joint conferences. Formerly of the Milwaukee North chapter, Chew has since moved to Maryland where she started the Wild Ones Chesapeake Bay chapter.

"He was always teaching us to observe nature, and look to see what plants go together and to make lines look very fluid," she said.

Many members recalled that Vorpahl helped to design plantings on berms for a Wild One member, Julie Marks, who had been diagnosed with cancer. Chew said members wanted to do something for Julie since she had been very involved in Wild Ones. Since she lived on a busy street, the berms provided a block to the noise of vehicles driving by.

"Don was very meticulous," Chew said. "I remember his draw-

ings laid out in Julie's garage where we carefully assembled bundles of seeds, transplants, etc. and followed his plan."

Vorpahl also helped design Carol Tennesen's Bayside, Wisconsin yard, which was the subject of a BBC program.

Tennesen recalled: "In July 1996, the Milwaukee North Chapter of Wild Ones planted my front yard as a group project for Flashback Television, Ltd., a British company. Flashback was doing a six-part landscaping and gardening series that would later air in England the following fall. For one of these projects they wanted to film a Midwest prairie garden in the making. My modest front yard was chosen for the makeover."

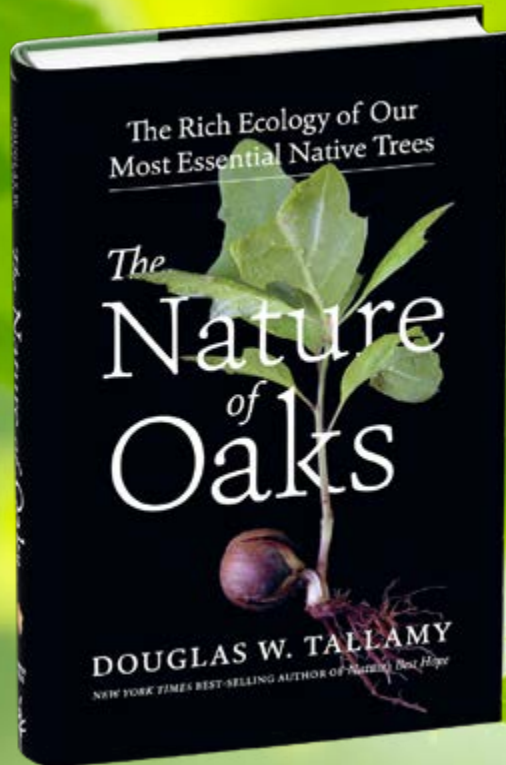
Tennesen said she drew several sets of plans and then arranged hoses on her lawn to get an idea of what the finished garden would look like.

"The final one was refined by landscape designer and Wild Ones board member Don Vorpahl, who served as consultant on the project," she said. Over 400 plants and almost 50 different species were donated by Wild Ones members.

"Don orchestrated the mulching and the planting by about a dozen Wild Ones volunteers," Tennesen recalled. "Thanks to Don's help, we created a prairie garden almost overnight, and while the garden has undergone many changes in the ensuing 25 years, it has remained as beautiful as the day it was born."

Vorpahl is survived by his wife, Lenore; three children, Kristin, David and Amy; and grandchildren, Benjamin, Alexander, Elizabeth, Evelyn, Jonathan and James.

Due to COVID-19, a memorial service is being planned at a later date.



"A timely and much needed call to plant, protect, and delight in these diverse, life-giving giants."

—David George Haskell, author of *The Forest Unseen* and *The Songs of Trees*

Get your copy of Douglas Tallamy's latest book *The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees* today!

Oaks sustain a complex and fascinating web of wildlife. *The Nature of Oaks* reveals what is going on in oak trees month by month, highlighting the seasonal cycles of life, death, and renewal. From woodpeckers who collect and store hundreds of acorns for sustenance to the beauty of jewel caterpillars, Tallamy illuminates and celebrates the wonders that occur right in our own yards. He also shares practical advice about how to plant and care for an oak, along with information about the best oak species for your area. *The Nature of Oaks* will inspire you to treasure these trees and to act to nurture and protect them.

Douglas Tallamy is a Wild Ones Honorary Director and professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has taught insect-related courses for 40 years.



Save the date on Oct 5th

for a Wild Ones webinar with Tallamy where he will share about his new book! More details to come!

Plant Natives 2021!

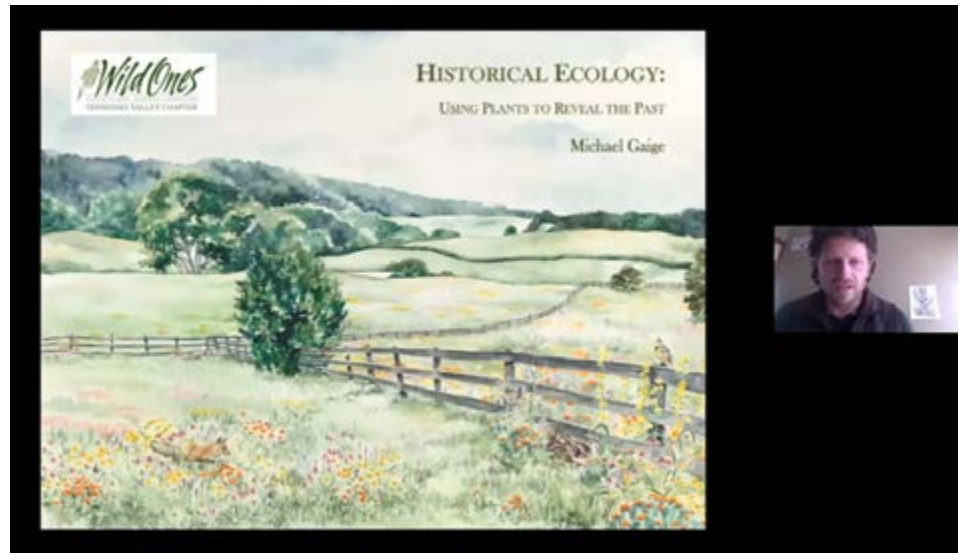
Tennessee Valley moves to virtual format

By Kristina Shaneyfelt

In 2011, before the Tennessee Valley Chapter of Wild Ones was fully formed, a small group of people who loved wildflowers held the first native plant symposium in our area. Each year since that very first one, we would plan and study the past events to see how we could improve.

In March 2020, our symposium co-chairs spent several days debating the fate of our event. Just two days before the symposium was set to begin, our city canceled all public events following the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We spent the next several days calling people, refunding registrations for the symposium and seminar, canceling the speakers and vendors, and wondering just how we would or could move forward. In the following weeks, we converted our public programming and Certificate in Native Plants classes to Zoom and worked with the national office to make it more accessible to other chapters. All thoughts of the 2021 symposium were set aside as we all learned to navigate our new reality.

In July 2020, without knowing what the coming months would bring, our board made the decision to make *Plant Natives 2021!* a virtual event with an outdoor marketplace and plant sale. The new symposium committee, chaired by Nora Bernhardt, Marinell Morgan and myself, researched all the options from multifaceted platforms for large virtual conferencing to webinars to other platform options, video storage and editing, outdoor venues, and budgeted for the worst case scenario.



Our committee began recommending an array of speakers to appeal to a wide audience, from novice native plant enthusiasts to advanced hobbyists and professionals. As we narrowed the list and began booking speakers, all of them graciously worked with us to offer password protected access for six months following the event. We just can't say enough good things about

Top, screenshot of one of the virtual presentations. Bottom, an outdoor marketplace the following weekend featured 10 native plant vendors from the area.

Tom Kimmerer, Benjamin Vogt, Michael Gaige, James Costa, Patricia Kyritsi Howell, Drew Lanham, Doug Tallamy, and Larry Mellichamp. All of these changes expanded our workload and new volunteer skills were needed for graphic design,



data management, video production, management of a large public venue and more. The amount of teamwork and volunteered time was incredible and so much appreciated!

In previous years, we offered a one- or two-day event; a half-day intensive class and dinner with the speakers; then a full day of speakers, native plant vendors, exhibitors and local artists all in one place. Going virtual allowed us the opportunity to expand the symposium across three days with speakers, advertising videos and informational slides. We wrapped up the symposium events the following weekend with an outdoor marketplace following our local mask mandate and CDC guidelines. In order to set speaker dates and times, we planned our timeline with advertising for our marketplace in mind.

We assisted many of our vendors and exhibitors in creating videos and providing voice overs. This was something we should have scheduled more time for by having an earlier deadline. Several of our chapter members recorded speaker introductions and short question and answer sessions. We used these recordings to adjust and maintain our schedule and they were a very popular addition in our feedback.

By the time we made it to symposium day, we had approximately 17 hours of virtual content (including

speakers), a password protected video portal, and a 50,000-square-foot venue for the marketplace complete with food trucks ready to go.

Online registrations were set up for each of our three events (seminar, symposium and marketplace) using Constant Contact Event Spot, which we used for chapter communications and registrations. We then transferred those registrations to the Zoom webinar link for each event, each day, using automatic reminders and links we created in Zoom to be sent to each attendee.

Since this was our first time importing into a webinar, a couple of volunteers matched each registration to each day's roster to make sure everything imported correctly. We had 239 symposium registrations with an average of 50% live attendance and our seminar had 82 registrations with 75% live. (For those in our Certificate in Native Plants program, live attendance was required for credit.) In the first few weeks after the symposium, there were more than 250 views through the portal. Current Wild Ones members made up 66% of our registrations, including members from 21 different chapters. We utilized polling within the webinar for audience location and the chat function to solicit feedback from attendees.

The following weekend, our

Screenshot of one of the virtual presentations. The symposium featured 17 hours of virtual content.

Native Plant Marketplace featured 10 native plant vendors from the surrounding area, four other vendors/exhibitors, and two food and drink trucks. We had several hundred people come and find great native trees, shrubs and forbs, native plant artwork, and other organizations sharing information about native plants.

For other chapters interested in our marketplace model, each year we secure the venue from chapter funds and provide free space for informational tables. Vendors selling goods were offered several sponsorship packages starting with a nominal fee so that each vendor could choose the best fit for their business and the level of advertising they preferred. I can't neglect mentioning the power of advertising. Wild Ones (national office), the Chattanooga Times Free Press, social media, press releases and radio and television interviews all promoted our events and helped us get the word out. In the month following the symposium our website analytics showed 61% of the traffic were new visitors. Social media numbers also increased; we had an increase to 1,785 on our Facebook page, over 1,300 in our Facebook group, 408 following on Instagram, and 145 subscribers to our YouTube channel where we upload our free public programming.

The feedback we received through chats and individual emails has been very kind. We are glad to know our hard work and new skills paid off. While we had a few technical glitches behind the scenes, we are still amazed we pulled it off and believe *Plant Natives 2021!* was a tremendous success.

Kristina Shaneyfelt is president of the Wild Ones Tennessee Valley Chapter. Check out their new chapter video at <https://vimeo.com/517412556>.