

**Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.**

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

All articles for the November 2022 newsletter, must be submitted to: [paulsonjerry@aol.com](mailto:paulsonjerry@aol.com) by October 21, 2022.

*Bats - Beyond the Myths*

**Thursday, October 20, 2022**

**Location: Rock Valley College  
Physical Education Center PEC0110 (lower level)  
3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, 61114  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Zoom: <https://bit.ly/WO-Oct-Zoom>**



**Barbara Williams**

Bats represent one quarter of all mammal species on earth yet they are widely misunderstood and persecuted. If we look past our prejudices we see that bats are inextricably linked to the health of our environment and our agricultural systems. Globally they consume huge quantities of crop pests and provide pollination services worth billions of dollars. Locally, bats are busily at work on mosquito control and crop pest reduction and they ask nothing more than to be left alone to do their work.

Barbara Williams will examine our local bats, and the challenges they face. We'll take a quick tour of the world's bats and attitudes that people have toward bats in different cultures, look at the risks and benefits of welcoming bats to your landscape, and ways you can accommodate and encourage bats without conflict. The program will include a brief demonstration of a bat detection microphone and recorder that can be used to monitor bat populations.

*Barbara Williams is a life-long student of natural history with many years of experience as a birder, photographer and traveler. She worked in Rockford at Burpee Museum's biology department for about ten years tending and cataloging the collections, creating exhibits and preparing specimens of plants, insects, birds and mammals. She also monitors dragonflies and bumblebees as part of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County citizen science program.*

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING - NOVEMBER 17, 7:00 p.m.**

The annual meeting of WORRV chapter will be held at Rock Valley College. We will have reports from our officers and a special program by Rob Clark about his year-long effort to visit all 44 of the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County during the centennial year of the Forest Preserve District. We will also have our seed exchange, so save your seeds. More information about preparing and packaging your seeds will be in the next newsletter. We will not have a potluck!

## *Message from the President* Jerry Paulson



**Jerry Paulson**

On September 15th about 20 members of WORRV gathered at Rock Valley College for our first in-person meeting in more than two years! We kicked off our reentry into on-site meetings with a special presentation by Bob Grese, retired professor, and current president of the Ann Arbor chapter of Wild Ones, who talked about two early pioneers

of natural landscaping in the Midwest, Jens Jensen and O.C. Simonds. My recap of the program is in this issue and the recording of the program is posted on our website.

It took a lot of planning to restart our meetings so that people who wanted to continue to participate via Zoom could access the program. Thank you to Ed Foster and Janet Giesen for working out the system to make it all happen. Thank you also to Linda Ricker for bringing the door prizes and membership materials, and to Ginnie Watson and her assistants for bringing our Wild Ones lending library to share. Bob Grese was impressed with the large number of books that we had on native plants

and natural landscaping and said he was going to go back to his chapter and suggest they do something similar at their meetings. Thanks also to the staff of RVC for helping us get started again.

As we start planning for next year, we need help in several areas to do the work of the Chapter:

- We can use people with good ideas about potential programs to join the Program Committee.
- We need a Co-coordinator for Membership to bring the name tags and membership information to the meetings who will work with Sallie Krebs.
- We are looking for someone who will call members to recruit volunteers for our spring plant sale and other events.
- We are looking for an editor for the newsletter who enjoys writing and grammar.
- We also need a coordinator of our Mentor program who can connect novices with experts on natural landscaping.

If you are willing to help with any of these tasks, please call or email me at 815-222-4414 or [paulsonjerry@aol.com](mailto:paulsonjerry@aol.com).

See you at our next meeting.

## *2022 Native Tree and Shrub Sale*

We sold 154 native trees and shrubs for planting in yards and forests throughout northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. We had orders from 40 people, including 28 native oaks and 8 Paw Paws, a rare native tree found growing naturally in only a few isolated sites in our area. Brian Halle was our tree and shrub sale coordinator, again this year. Thank you, Brian.

Like native wildflowers, grasses, and sedges, native trees and shrubs provide habitat for birds, butterflies, pollinators, and other wildlife. Trees and shrubs clean the air we breathe, keep us cooler in the summer, and lessen the negative effects of heavy rainfalls. Additionally, native trees and shrubs add value to your property.

**Brian Halle checks orders of native trees and shrubs.**



## September Program Recap Jerry Paulson

### Roots of Sustainability: Jens Jensen, O.C. Simonds, and other pioneers in native garden design



**Bob Grese**

We met in-person at Rock Valley College on September 15 to hear Bob Grese, Professor Emeritus in the School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and the former director of the University's Matthaei

Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum talk about the work of O.C. Simonds and Jens Jensen. Both were early landscape architects who advocated an ecologically based approach to landscape design who worked throughout the Midwest and were known for the "Prairie style" of landscape gardening. Bob is the author of *Jens Jensen: Maker of Natural Parks and Gardens* and *The Native Landscape Reader* and serves as the president of the Ann Arbor Chapter of the Wild Ones. The program was also live streamed via Zoom.

Jens Jensen advocated for the use of native plants in American gardens instead of the exotic, imported plants that were popular at the turn of the 20th century. Jensen and Simonds advocated a regionally-based approach to landscape design that fit into the natural landscape. The "prairie style" promoted by them was inspired by the prairies and oak openings found in the Great Lakes region and Midwest. Jensen, especially, wanted to bring both children and adults in touch with nature by creating places that would reconnect them to the natural world.

Jensen's best known park design was for Lincoln Memorial Gardens in Springfield, Illinois. He worked with the Garden Clubs of Illinois to create natural plantings to represent each state that Abraham Lincoln lived, and organized boy and girl scout troops all across Illinois to collect acorns and nuts to bring to plant in the gardens to create native forests on the bare site.

O. C. Simonds worked in all 48 states, including along the Rock River valley. He is best known

for his work to redesign Graceland Cemetery in Chicago and the Jay Morton estate in Lisle, Sinnissippi Park in Rockford and Lowell Park in Dixon, as well as many private homes and estates, including Indian Hill Manor southwest of Rockford. Simonds garden designs encouraged people to walk from opening to opening, discovering what was around each corner. He was known for creating "outdoor rooms and sun openings" and highlighting views of the sunrise and sunset.



#### Gardens at Indian Hill Manor For more information, visit

<https://indianhillmanor.net/indian-hill-manor-and-the-prairie-gardens-of-o-c-simonds/>

Both Jensen and Simonds were active in the land conservation

movement that promoted the creation of state parks and forest preserves in Illinois in the early 20th century. Jensen held popular walking tours to nearby natural areas in the Chicago area and was a founder of the Friends of the Native Landscape that in 1928 proposed the creation of State parks.

Grese ended his presentation with recommendations for incorporating native plants into your home landscape without running afoul of local weed ordinances. The recording of the program is posted on the WORRV website at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM286yX3MIk>

Those who attended in-person got to choose door prizes of Wild Ones logo t-shirts, caps, cups, and other stuff provided by the National Wild Ones office.

## *Environmental Awareness Award Presented to Wild Ones Rock River Valley*

**Linda Ricker**

On September 29th, the Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District had its "Fall Gathering" at the Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center, located in Pecatonica. This year awards were presented to recognize deserving people and organizations for their conservation effort and ethics. Our Wild Ones Rock River Valley chapter was selected to receive the Environmental Awareness Award, for our organization's efforts in holding native plant sales, and the monthly educational sessions we provide.

Vice President Linda Ricker and former board member Ken Keilsmeier attended the event to accept this award on behalf of our chapter.

Other awards were given as follows: Environmental Education Award, Michael Drews, for work with school programs; Next Generation Farmers, Michael and Stevin Leick, for using no till and other conservation farming techniques; Chairman's Special Award, Rockford Park District, for work on water quality improvement near Levings Lake; and Director Service Award, Roger Christin, in honor of his long service record to the area in conservation.

Before the awards were presented, we were taken on a wagon tour of the center's 750 acres of

wetlands, wildlife forage areas, ponds, woods, and educational facilities, and the ongoing restorations they are working on. The youth center focuses on giving Illinois youth a chance to learn the values of nature through a variety of activities, such as fishing clinics and other nature related activities.

Thank you to the SWCD for our award and for recognizing the hard work our members and volunteer provide to accomplish the plant sales and the monthly meetings. Thanks to you all for all your hard work!



## *Ed Foster's Conservation @ Home*

**Mark Luthin**

*Article provided by the Natural Land Institute*  
Cup plant, compass plant, rosinweed, senna, butterfly weed, and the largest lead plant (call Guinness!) I've ever seen greeted me as I walked up to Ed Foster's door. Centered in the front yard of an average-sized Rockford city lot, Ed's "island" of native plants presented the purples of Echinacea and Monarda to the yellows of Senna and the fore-mentioned Silphium species. It stood in stark contrast to his neighbor's chemically treated, manicured lawn across the street. Along the sidewalk leading up to the front door, 3 foot tall Solomon's seal and huge Jack-in-the-Pulpits and colorful St. John's Wort welcome guests (and pollinators). The neighbor's maples provide ample shade for a ground cover of wild ginger, wild geranium, Solomon's seal, green dragon and a host of other shade loving plants. A beautiful little pond is the main attraction in Ed's backyard, fully surrounded by native plants. Bees and dragonflies

were quite active on this warm sunny day. Speaking of bees, Ed has an active honeybee hive, and a number of bee houses that mason bees were utilizing. Ed has 3 compost bins, including one that feeds his herb garden. Even though it's not on the C@H checklist, solar panels convert the sun's energy into electricity for Ed, his dog Roxy and his cats. Planting native plants and not using chemical fertilizers and pesticides creates a haven for our pollinator friends. Ed Foster has proven that you don't need acres of land to do this.

For information about the Conservation @ Home program contact the Natural Land Institute, 815-964-666 or go to [www.naturalland.org](http://www.naturalland.org). The WORRV Chapter is a partner with NLI with this program.

(Editor's note: Ed is a member of the Board of Wild Ones RRV Chapter)



## Bell Bowl Prairie *Update*

### Engineering Firm Proves Airport Expansion Plans Can Proceed Without Further Destruction of Bell Bowl Prairie



During the Save Bell Bowl Prairie meeting on September 8th, consultants with the Geosyntec engineering firm presented [a solution](#) to preserving Bell Bowl Prairie while continuing with the Rockford Airport's ongoing expansion plan.

Based on the Rockford Airport's own design proposals laid out in their 2022 Biological Assessment in conjunction with the Federal Aviation Administration, Geosyntec's environmental engineer Dennis Dreher and civil engineer Dawn Brook proposed small changes to the airport's own designs that would meet the needs of the expanding airport while minimizing impacts to Bell Bowl Prairie.

Their plan would involve [combining several of the Airport's proposed design alternatives](#). The report noted that it is possible to shift the

proposed cargo building to the west, where there is ample land area to accommodate the 1 million square foot building. The proposed plan would also route the road around the prairie and reduce the speed limit on this road to meet safety guidelines.

In conversations between prairie advocates and Sen. Dick Durbin's office, the senator's staff have committed to assisting the airport in applying for funding to redesign the road so that the prairie can be spared. This proposed solution would allow for the resumption of construction on the expansion without a pending lawsuit from the Natural Land Institute. In late August, Judge Ian Johnston recommended that the airport enter into mediated talks with prairie advocates, but the airport has rejected this advice.



Photo credits: Bell Bowl Prairie by Jessie Crow Mermel (upper left) and Rusty Patched Bumblebee (above) by Ellen Rathbone

## *Membership Update* Sallie Krebs, Membership Coordinator

A membership e-form and our membership brochure describing the benefits of membership are both available on the chapter website ([www.wildonesrrvc.org](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org)). Click on Join/Renew under the Membership tab. You can renew (or join) with any major credit card through PayPal (no PayPal account required) by using our website. We appreciate your support!

### **180 memberships as of October 26, 2022**

### **Special thanks to our members who made contributions above the basic \$40 dues!**

Lisa Bleed, Rockford

Mike & Deb Eickman, Rockton

Brett & Margret Hanson, Belvidere

*New members are identified with a green ribbon on their meeting name badges. Please introduce yourself to them and help us welcome all new members to our great chapter!*

About 20 attended the September Meeting

### **A big thank you to our September meeting volunteers!**

Greeters: Linda Ricker

AV/Sound Equipment: Ed Kletecka, Janet Giesen

Meeting Recap: Jerry Paulson

Library Assistants: Cathy Johnson , Jackie Rheaume

### **Anniversaries:**

5 Years:

Don Miller, Rockford

Bryan & Peggy Redington, Rockford

John, Dawn & Peyton Skupien, Roscoe

### **In Memoriam**

In memory of our former Wild Ones

Rock River Valley Chapter members

Lynda Johnson - Member 1997-2022

### **It is preferred that renewal memberships be submitted through the Member Center online**

rather than by check for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. To renew your Wild Ones membership Log in or contact [support@wildones.org](mailto:support@wildones.org) for more information. Your expiration date is on your chapter newsletter above your name on the label. You will receive several emails from the Wild Ones national organization prior to your expiration date. If you want to join Wild Ones as a new member go to the Member Center. Remember that your dues include membership in both National Wild Ones and our chapter. If you need to mail a check, please use the address below:

### **WILD ONES**

ATTN: MEMBERSHIP

2285 BUTTE DES MORTS BEACH RD

NEENAH, WI 54912-1274

A portion of all dues paid is returned to the chapter by National Wild Ones to support our chapter activities. National Wild Ones provides liability insurance for our meetings and events. All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.

Please send address and email address changes to the Membership Coordinator: Sallie Krebs  
Email: [membershipworrvc@gmail.com](mailto:membershipworrvc@gmail.com) or call (815) 540-4730 if you have any questions about membership. Wild Ones Annual Memberships: Household \$40,

Limited Income/Full-Time Student \$25,

Affiliate Non-Profit Organization \$90,

Business \$250.

**Thank you for your continuing support!**



NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

## ROCK RIVER VALLEY

ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Sallie Krebs

1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104

PMB 233

Rockford, IL 61107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### *Don't become extinct!*

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 10/1/2022, this is your last chapter newsletter and you have received your last Wild Ones Journal until you renew your membership. National Wild Ones drops expired memberships the first week of the expiration month, so please don't be late! See the Membership Update for renewal information.

Mail your renewal to:

Sallie Krebs

Wild Ones Rock River Valley

7492 Renfro Rd.

Cherry Valley, IL 61016



### *Wild Ones Mission*

Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization.

### *Rock River Valley Chapter Meetings*

Our regular meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at Rock Valley College. We are live streaming the program over ZOOM and posting videos on YouTube of the program. Links to the meetings and programs are posted on our website and our Facebook page, and sent to members via email the week of the meeting. If you want to receive the link send an email to: [janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com).

### *Rock River Valley Chapter Board and Coordinators*

#### **BOARD**

*President:* Jerry Paulson

(815) 222.4414 [paulsonjerry@aol.com](mailto:paulsonjerry@aol.com)

*Vice President:* Linda Tabb Ricker (217)

649.3966 [greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com](mailto:greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com)

*Secretary:* Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865

[catjohn\\_22@yahoo.com](mailto:catjohn_22@yahoo.com)

*Treasurer:* Janet Giesen (815) 762.5912

[janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com)

*Board members:*

Kim Lowman Vollmer (815) 397.6044

[kimlowvol@aol.com](mailto:kimlowvol@aol.com)

Ed Foster (815) 654-3441 [thistletwo@aol.com](mailto:thistletwo@aol.com)

*Facebook coordinator:* Dawn Skupien

(815) 262.7864 [dawnskupien@gmail.com](mailto:dawnskupien@gmail.com)

*Library coordinator:* Ginnie Watson

(815) 398.0138 [vsWatson47@aol.com](mailto:vsWatson47@aol.com)

*Membership coordinator:* Sallie Krebs

(as to the left)

*Mentor coordinator:* [open position]

*Merchandise coordinator:* Cynthia Chmell

(815) 969.7435 [cynthiachmell@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiachmell@gmail.com)

*Native plant sale coordinators:* Janet Giesen

(as to the left)

Jane Evans (815) 494-7731

*Newsletter editor:* [open position]

*Newsletter production:* Jessie Crow Mermel

(815) 955.0653 [serendipitree@gmail.com](mailto:serendipitree@gmail.com)

*Plant rescue/seeds coordinator:* Mary Anne

Mathwich (815) 721.5187 [mprairiedock@aol.com](mailto:mprairiedock@aol.com)

*Program coordinators:* Lisa Johnson

(779) 537.8939

[lejohnson3804@outlook.com](mailto:lejohnson3804@outlook.com)

Mark Luthin (815) 543.7412

[m.luthin@comcast.net](mailto:m.luthin@comcast.net)

Linda Tabb Ricker (as to the left)

*Publicity coordinator:* Dawn Skupien

(as to the left)

*Show Me/Help Me coordinator:*

Linda Tabb Ricker (as to the left)

*Tree & shrub sale coordinator:* Brian Hale

(815) 289.2384 [treeandshrubsale@gmail.com](mailto:treeandshrubsale@gmail.com)

*Volunteer coordinator:* [open position]

*Website coordinator:* Janet Giesen (as to

the left)

*Youth education & grants coordinator:* Kim

Lowman Vollmer (as to the left)

#### **APPOINTED COORDINATORS**

*Booth coordinator:* [open position]