

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

Inside this Issue 7:

Message from the Co-President	2
Prairie Plant Sale Recap	3
Board in Action	3
June Meeting Recap	4-5
Monarch Photo Contest	5
May SM/HM Recap	6-7
Membership	7
Chapter Calendar	7
Chapter Contact Information	8



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Articles for the August 2014 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Chair, at: Pambi@wildonesrrvc.org by July 23, 2014.

*The Prairie Spirit in Landscape Gardening
Member Potluck and Garden Tour
Thursday, July 17, 2014*

**Indian Hill Manor and Farm
6901 Kishwaukee Rd., Rockford, IL**

See article for directions – do not enter Kishwaukee address in GPS!

Time: 6:00 – 9:00 pm (Come at 6:00pm and walk around the grounds and socialize; eat at 7:00pm; tour and learn about the grounds and early Prairie Landscaping, after we eat, close to 8:00pm.

On July 17th, Wild Ones members will be visiting the grounds of Indian Hill Manor, a private estate on the Kishwaukee River southwest of Rockford that was laid out by Ossian Cole Simonds, one of the early members of the Prairie School of landscape architects. The foundation that owns the Manor is in the process of rehabilitating the border plantings and beds on the grounds using native trees and shrubs, and restoring a “meadow” that was part of the original landscape design.

Jerry Paulson, the past director of the Natural Land Institute who is now a consultant to the Foundation, and Jack Kaskel, Wild Ones member and owner of Red Buffalo Nursery, will talk about the use of native plants in the landscape design of Indian Hill Manor, and the early movement in the Midwest to promote the “Prairie Spirit” in landscaping gardening. Jack is helping with the restoration of the manor grounds.

O. C. Simonds was part of the Prairie School or Prairie Style of landscape architects, terms that described the work of such pioneers in Midwestern landscape design as Jens Jensen, Walter Burley Griffin and Simonds. He incorporated the “modest beauty of the prairie” into what was the first truly American vision of park and garden design. These early 1900s designs used native plants instead of “gaudy foreigners” and cultivars from China and Europe, drawing on the Midwestern prairie landscape as the genesis of their work. Simmons designed Chicago’s Graceland Cemetery, the Morton Arboretum, Rockford’s Sinnissippi Park, and Lowell Park in Dixon.

Jerry credits growing up on his family farm before the country roads were cleared and widened for his love of wildflowers. Prairie plants still grew along the roadside, and woodland wildflowers survived in wooded remnants on the back road. He enjoyed the flowers, not knowing what they were until years later in college where he took classes in botany, plant ecology and ornamental horticulture.

After graduation from the University of Illinois he worked for George Fell at the Natural Land Institute for ten years, returning after twenty years to be the director. He helped

cont’d on pg 2

**Chapter 20th Anniversary Celebration
WILD FOR MONARCHS
Lecture and Tour
July 26 and 27, 2014 Don't miss it!
See brochure insert for all information**

Message from the Co-President Ginnie Watson

20th Anniversary Festivities! July 26 and 27, 2014



Ginnie Watson

photo by Jon McGinty

Be excited! Be very excited! What a big year this is for Wild Ones! As a national organization Wild Ones is celebrating 35 years as a unified group of like minded individuals with a “mission to educate and share information with members and community at the “plants roots” level and to promote biodiversity and environmentally sound practices”. We also are celebrating a mile stone. This is our **20th Anniversary** as a chartered chapter and we couldn't be more proud!

The Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter joined the national organization as the 6th chartered chapter in July of 1994. As of this writing, out of 52 total chapters nationwide, we are the second largest chapter, and the largest Illinois chapter, at 191 strong and growing. To celebrate our rising star we are putting on a great workshop, **Wild for Monarchs: Inviting Nature Home – Lecture**, to demonstrate what we are all about and what can be done with native plants.

Here is the plan. Michael R. Jeffords, Ph.D., retired entomologist with the Illinois Natural History Survey, author, photographer and popular speaker, will start us off on Saturday, 9:00 AM, at the Northern Illinois University Rockford site-8500 E. State Street-with a program about **Surrounding Yourself with Nature: Strategies for the Home Landscape**. Incidentally, Dr. Jeffords and his wife, Susan Post, were very involved

with the magazine “Illinois Steward” while it was being published. If you enjoyed reading that marvelous magazine you will want to be sure to attend Dr. Jeffords presentation! This lecture will be free to members, with a \$5.00 donation requested from non-members. Anyone signing up for membership that morning will get the lecture for free!

Following this introduction to native landscaping, the self-directed tour of 9 natural yards and native landscapes in Rockford, Belvidere, Roscoe, and South Beloit will begin, running from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. The event brochure states, “Each stop will feature different uses of native plants, activities for families, and information about ways to help save Monarchs from disappearing. A milkweed plant will be given to each family that participates, while supplies last.” Additional milkweed plant varieties will be offered for sale, as well. The tour will be available again on Sunday from 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. so that you may spend more time at each site or revisit sites of particular interest.

Our target audience is the gardener who has not yet embraced native plants or is not familiar with Wild Ones, so this is a tremendous opportunity to introduce friends, family, neighbors and coworkers to the value and benefits of native plantings. Get a group together and let us inspire them with these showcase yards. Remember, this event is free to Wild Ones members. Anyone becoming a member at the lecture will receive immediate membership benefits! Our 20th Anniversary Committee is pulling out all the stops to make this a terrific event so...

**Save the dates, July 26-27...
YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS!**

to preserve and restore thousands of acres of natural land in Illinois, including the Nygren Wetland Preserve in Rockton. He retired from NLI in 2013, and is now working to develop plans and programs for Indian Hill Manor and Farm.

This program is only for Wild Ones members and their guests. The tour of the manor grounds and gardens will NOT INCLUDE A TOUR OF THE MANOR.

Paper plates, napkins & plastic cutlery, and cups will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass, and lawn chairs.

Directions: Indian Hill Manor is located at 6901 Kishwaukee Road, west of the Rockford airport, on the corner of South Bend Road. Take U.S. 20 by-pass to the South Main St./IL Rt. 2 exit and drive south on South Main to the road to the airport; cross the river and turn right at the stop light onto Kishwaukee Rd.; follow the road around the airport and cross the Kishwaukee River; **turn left onto South Bend Road. Please use the South Bend Road entrance.** If you end up at Indian Hill Forest Preserve, or the farm, drive back east to South Bend Rd. and turn right; the entrance is on the left. Call 815-222-4414 if you get lost.

Submitted by Lynda and Lee Johnson, Co-Chairs/Program

2014 Prairie Plant Sale Rick & Debby Freiman, Prairie Plant Sale Coordinators

This year's Prairie Plant Sale sold 2,240 plants. Two species, Thimbleweed & Tussock Sedge, were not delivered by our supplier due to "crop failure", but were replaced by the popular Pale Purple Coneflower and Butterfly Weed.

Demand was underestimated and the plants sold out before the April 28 order deadline. Our order was placed to the supplier by the March 3rd deadline with the quantities based on order history and guessing. Next year's order will probably be increased by 40-50% and will expand the number of species offered.



Marie Buech of Byron was the first to place a Prairie Plant Sale order on March 6th.

A big "Thank You!" goes to the volunteers who helped through the wind, rain, and forty-degree temperatures with overnight frost warnings: Bob Arevalo, Olga and Dan Bechtol, Ron Cress, Deb Eickman, Janet Giesen, Steve Hall, Cathy Johnson, Ed Kletecka, Cynthia Nelson, Jim Nelson, Jerry Paulson, Guy Smith, Marcia Speck, Diane Stenerson, and Emmylou Studier. Also, special thanks to Jerry Paulson for use of his farm, Tim Lewis for making the flyer and order form, Lenae Weichel for the detailed transitional notes and assistance, Barb Flores for her plant sale advice, and the many Wild Ones board members who gave advice and support during our first year of plant sale coordinating.



Janet Giesen and Joe Hemlock pull orders for customers at the Prairie Plant Sale

Board of Directors in Action Cathy Johnson, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter Board of Directors, as discussed at the June 12, 2014 meeting, include the following.

- On July 26th and 27th, the chapter will commemorate its 20th anniversary with a workshop at Rock Valley College at 9:00a.m. July 26th, followed by a free yard tour from 11:00a.m.-5:00p.m. The yard tours will also continue Sunday, the 27th, from 1:00-5:00p.m. At the workshop, Dr. Michael Jeffords will speak on **Surrounding Yourself with Nature: Strategies for the Home Landscape**. This talk is free for Wild Ones members and \$5 for non-members. The following tour of yards featuring natural landscaping is free.
- Chapter membership continues to grow, with 188 members as compared to 171 in June 2013.
- The 2014 Native Woodland and Prairie Plant Sales concluded successfully, with more than 4,500 native plants purchased for addition to the ecosystem in counties of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin.

June Meeting Recap Cynthia Nelson

Brian Russert is the Natural Areas Coordinator for the Milwaukee County Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture where he manages 10,000 acres of natural areas that are within the 15,600 acres in the park system. He also serves as academic staff for the University of Wisconsin Extension. This organizational partnership is well-suited for the dual goals of land management and educational outreach to the community. When Brian started working for the park system six years ago he had the opportunity, as the sole employee responsible for natural area management, to determine the direction for a program that had previously received minimal attention and resources. One of the first tasks he undertook was to develop a mission statement that reflects a philosophy of integrating conservation value with the needs of the population:

Blending Milwaukee County's diverse
and unique natural areas with its
culturally rich communities to preserve
and nurture its natural heritage for
current and future generations.

He believes people who have access to natural areas are more likely to make a connection with nature and more likely to support conservation efforts. The goal of preserving natural areas for future generations does not imply, in his view, fencing off natural areas from the current generation.

The predominance of woodlands in Milwaukee county natural areas is a contrast to the prairie areas that Brian worked in when he served as the County Conservationist for Winnebago County for 9 1/2 years.

A native prairie planting in Mitchell Boulevard Park which is just north of the Brewers Stadium, includes a diverse representation of plants that provide habitat for butterflies, bees, and moths as well as, perhaps, a nostalgia fix for prairie landscapes. Since the park is in an urban area, the prairie area is maintained by occasional mowing rather than by burning. Natural resource management in urban and suburban areas can differ both in terms of goals and methods from management in rural areas. Brian described managing some areas as hybrid ecologies. One example of this is the decision to manage a grassland area to support the birds nesting in the park, rather than working to restore the area to its pre-settlement status. Another is permitting existing non-native shrubs to remain (as long as they are not invasive), because of their importance as habitat for birds and invertebrates. Establishing corridors between isolated habitat areas might not be possible when parks are interspersed in an urban area; however creating a stopover point for migrating birds could be. His idea is to think about an area in terms

of the benefit that is realistic to provide, rather than subscribing to a purist view of what goals to pursue. Many of the parks in Milwaukee County are located within, and at times surrounded by, residential areas. It is important to consider the impact of any maintenance activities on the people living in the neighborhood, as well as to educate them about the goals of the projects and the importance of native plantings. At the same time, it is important to respect the culture and traditions of the neighborhood, and the connections people have with their own park.

Milwaukee County is the most populous county in the state, with just under a million people. In spite of being Wisconsin's most urban county, the county supports a diversity of species, including 685 plant species that have been identified in the park system, the vast majority of which are native species. An example of diversity in a relatively small park is seen at Jacobus Park, which is in the middle of the county along the Menomonee River. The park includes 197 species of native plants and there is a stand of pre-settlement oaks on the river bluffs. There is a remnant prairie within the park system which covers about 20 acres. The county has 85 miles of rivers running through, many of which are protected as natural corridors for wildlife and plant dispersal. The county is bordered on the East by Lake Michigan. Surveys in the park system have revealed 89 species of birds that breed in the county. In addition, over 240 species of migrating birds have been sighted. Because of the Lake, the county is a major migration corridor for birds, bats, and migrating butterflies, including Monarchs. The park system includes 10.6 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, as well as three state natural areas with high quality remnant ecologies, including wetlands and woods. There are 19 species of herptiles (reptiles and amphibians) in the area, including blue-spotted and tiger salamanders.

The county is within an ecological tension zone, which is a band of land that crosses Wisconsin from Polk and St. Croix counties in the Northwest to Milwaukee in the Southeast, and divides the state into two ecological regions. The result is a diverse area in Milwaukee County, with representative plant communities from both North and South of the band. Trees include species from both the Laurentian Mixed Forest to the North (which is more like forests in Northeastern Minnesota, Northern Michigan, and Southern Ontario) and the Eastern Broadleaf Forest to the South (which is more like forests of Southern Michigan, Illinois, and Indiana). Maple-Basswood Forest and Beech-Maple Forest predominates in the county, although there is an 80 acre oak savannah in the Southwest corner of the county within the park system. Trees such as those found in the

North are found near Lake Michigan. For example, white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*) is found in the Warnimont Bluff Fens State Natural Area in Warnimont Park, as well as many plants of interest that thrive in an alkaline wetland. Lost to the county are the conifer swamps, which were once a part of the landscape, but were drained in order to develop the land for other uses.

There were multiple challenges in developing the program for natural area management, including entrenched invasive species, isolated habitat areas, lack of partnerships in conservation, and financial and staffing limitations. At the top of the list of priorities for management are high quality areas that have not been degraded or infested with invasive species, including remnant ecologies. These are important areas for conservation, and do not require major resources and effort to maintain. Sites with unique features, including ephemeral wetlands, are important to protect and may elicit funding support for protection efforts. Community-motivated restoration areas are likely to be supported by local communities and organizations through funding and volunteer activities.

Brian emphasized the importance of having a detailed plan of action that includes goals and objectives, timelines and schedules of activities, and the methods to be employed for the work. The planning document provides a blueprint for action, as well as a basis for the evaluation of progress and outcomes. It is a key element in seeking funding through public or private organizations. Information including plant inventories and wildlife surveys is essential to the planning process. Planning takes into account the habitat needs of species that are present. In addition, the activity period of a sensitive wildlife species present in an area is important for the scheduling of certain restoration activities. Planning control measures for invasive species requires monitoring the presence and abundance of these problem plants. There are 40 invasive species currently under management in the park system: 17 have rapid response-level populations, 11 can be significantly reduced with management within 5-10 years; 12 are thoroughly entrenched and will require a long-term commitment to sustained control. It is important to get the first group that are new to the area under control before they reach a tipping point of rapid proliferation. Those species that have been in the area for some time but are not entrenched can be effectively managed, but it will take some years. Using effective methods at the optimal time of year will improve success rates and minimize the resources required for control.

Although Brian now has two assistants, this is still a small staff. Volunteers have been very important in accomplishing objectives set out in the planning document. In turn, the volunteers have the opportunity

Monarch Photo Contest for Kids!

The IDNR Division of Education is reviving the Kids for Conservation program and is relaunching this program with a photo contest featuring monarch butterflies. This is a wonderful idea as the monarch is the Illinois state insect and a creature that desperately needs our help. Photos must be taken in Illinois by Illinois youth and can be of the monarch in any stage, but should not include people. The photos must be submitted with the youth photographer's name (only first names will be used for display) and age, so be sure to include that information. Three digital images may be entered per youth; the deadline for submission is August 17th. Please email them to dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov. The photos will be featured at the Illinois State Fair (August 7-17) and on the Kids for Conservation web page (<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/outreach/kidsconservation/Pages/default.aspx>). You can check out the website, which has lots of fun activities and information. Have fun hunting and photographing!

Kim Lowman Vollmer, Youth Education and Grant Chair
grants@wildonesrrvc.org

to learn about the work and experience the natural areas. Adults may come out for volunteer days sponsored by their employer, or volunteer for work days planned by The Park People, a non-profit organization that supports the County Park System. The next generation of conservationists is learning about the work through participation in school groups, citizen science days, or Eagle Scout activities. The Student Conservation Association provides training and work experience to secondary students from the inner city, as well as the possibility of being awarded a scholarship for post-secondary studies that is sponsored by a local business. The University of Milwaukee's Institute for Service Learning has a program that allows University students to earn course credit for training and service in the Park System. From 2009 through 2013, a total of 9,100 volunteers went through training and accounted for 76,000 hours of volunteer work. The natural resource team currently has partnerships with 75 businesses, organizations, schools, and governmental agencies.

After describing how he used the same principles for planning the landscape for his own home on a two acre lot in the county, he closed his talk with a quote from Aldo Leopold: "To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent thinking".

References

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Wisconsin Forest Management Guidelines (2011).

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestManagement/guidelines.html>

Milwaukee County Parks and University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension. Natural Areas 2013 Annual Report.

<http://county.milwaukee.gov/ImageLibrary/Groups/cntyParks/Planning/naturalareas/AnnualReport2013.pdf>

Milwaukee County Parks Website.

<http://county.milwaukee.gov/Parks>

May 2014 Show Me/Help Me Anita Johnson

Approximately 30 people attended our first Show Me/Help Me of the 2014 season on a picture perfect Saturday morning. We began the morning at Mary Kuller's beautiful woodland yard. Under a canopy of white oak, walnut, hackberry, ash, and black cherry, Mary's yard is truly a showplace for shady plants-both native and non-native. Since purchasing the property twenty years ago, she has striven to maintain its natural beauty. Mary indicated that she never uses pesticides or fertilizers and rarely needs to water except when introducing a new plant. Mary has enjoyed photographing her woodland plants and has the distinction of winning Wild Ones photo contests on numerous occasions.

Next we visited the yard of Marcia DeClerk. Since 2003, Marcia has been working to replace non-natives with natives. As the group walked through the yard, many healthy native trees and shrubs were identified: nannyberry viburnum, pagoda dogwood, serviceberry, musclewood, hazelnut, New Jersey tea. We also observed that Marcia has been very successful in introducing common milkweed to her yard.



Mary Kuller's lush woodland with not a bit of lawn grass

Some of Marcia's prairie plants and woodland ephemerals have been obtained from Wild One's plant rescues such as the hard to find "kittentail". Marcia's present challenge is the entrance to her front door. The area is shaded by a crabapple tree. It was agreed that an overgrown yew should be removed. Additional suggestions included adding a witch hazel, a climbing rose, and softening the ground with woodland ephemerals.

At our third yard of the morning, we were welcomed by



Marcia DeClerk points out prairie plants in a sunny border planting to Diane Stenerson as the group waits for those who got stuck on the Memorial Day Parade route.

the Englof's. They would like to create a woodland community under a magnificent collection of bur oaks. They also would appreciate suggestions for the sunny area at the entrance into their yard and the wetland creek area in the lower portion of their yard. Ellwyn is approaching his landscaping plans in a very systematic way by completing a soil test of the yard, enlisting the help of a Wild Ones mentor, attending Wild Ones educational lectures, and scheduling a Show Me/Show Me.

Ellwyn Englof gets input from the group in his wooded back yard.



Because Ellwyn desires a more manicured look at the sunny entrance to his home, short prairie grasses were suggested along with showy native forbes such as prairie coreopsis, pale purple coneflower, butterfly weed, prairie smoke and prairie petunia. Organic material (leaf mulch and compost) should be added to the islands under the oaks. The group identified some very desirable woodland plants already in the yard: bloodroot, Jack in the Pulpit, Solomon's seal, ginger and trillium. Care should be taken

in moving these plants at the appropriate time of the year - preferably early Spring. Trillium is especially sensitive to transplanting. Some plants suggested for the wetland area include swamp milkweed, elderberry, button bush, New England aster, and blue flag iris. Horse tail and different sedges were identified on the site. Following the tour, members enjoyed lemonade, cold water, and cookies. What a wonderful morning!

photos by Mary Anne Mathwich

Membership Update Shey Lowman, Membership Co-Chair

Thanks to our **12 members** who renewed this month! A membership e-form and our membership brochure describing the benefits of membership are both available on the chapter website (www.wildonesrrvc.org), just click on the Membership tab. Thank you in advance for helping us reach our goal of 200 members in 2014!

191 memberships on June 23, 2014

Special thanks to our members who made donations above the basic \$37 dues!

Kirby & Dan Doyle, Rockford, IL
Mike & Deb Eickman, Rockton, IL
Cathy Johnson, Rockford, IL
Marika & Darryl Mertz, Rockford, IL
Jeff Stack & Kathy Mielke, Roscoe, IL

Welcome to new members!

Mary Beth Johnson, Clinton, WI
Jessica Klinkhammer, South Beloit, IL
Kyle Kuranz, Roscoe, IL
Marika & Darryl Mertz, Rockford, IL
Khrisa Miskell, Rockford, IL
Marcia Mueller & Charles Prorok, Rockford, IL

Anniversaries

Congratulations to this month's loyal members!

20 Years

Cecilia Coles, Belvidere, IL
Joe Jonakin, Byron, IL

15 Years

Pam & Dick Gambrel, Chana, IL

10 Years

Melanie Costello, Stillman Valley, IL
Paul Crittenden, Rockford, IL
Randy & Sylvia Downing, Stockton, IL

79, including 8 visitors, attended the June meeting. A big thank you to our June meeting volunteers!

Refreshments- Cynthia Nelson
AV/Sound Equipment- Rick Freiman
Library Assistant- Karen Matz
Greeters- Marilyn Heneghan, Janaan Lewis
Meeting Recap for the Newsletter- Cynthia Nelson
Photographer- Tim Lewis

It is preferred that renewal memberships be sent directly to the chapter for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. Please use the address below:

**Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter
1643 N Alpine Rd Ste 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107-1464**

Your expiration date is on your chapter newsletter and your national Journal address labels. You will be mailed a renewal reminder two months prior to your expiration date with a completed membership form and return envelope for your convenience.

Please send address and email address changes to Shey Lowman at shey@wildonesrrvc.org.

Thirty percent of all dues paid are returned to the chapter by National Wild Ones to support our chapter activities. All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.

Thank you for your continued support!

2014 Chapter Programs and Events

July 17
7:00-9:00 pm

Summer Evening Member Social
Tour of Native Landscaping & Potluck
Members only: This is a great time to join!
Contact Membership Co-Chair:
Shey@wildonesrrvc.org

Jerry Paulson, Host
Chapter Vice President

Indian Hill Manor

Aug-Sept

Native Tree & Shrub Sale
Orders taken during this time

John Peterson
Tree and Shrub Sale Coordinator
815-979-8539

August 21
7:00-9:00 pm

Learning the Butterflies in Our Local
Native Landscapes

Don Miller, Director-Severson
Dells Nature Center
Rock Valley College
Woodward Technology

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.
Please contact Lynda and Lee Johnson at (815) 629-2781 for more information.



NATIVE PLANTS. NATURAL LANDSCAPES

ROCK RIVER VALLEY

ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Pambi Camacho
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107

Don't become extinct!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is **7/1/2014**, this is your last chapter newsletter and you have received your last *Wild Ones Journal* until you activate your membership

You may receive a renewal notice from both the National organization and your chapter. Your membership information will be updated quicker if you renew through your chapter so you won't miss an Issue 7 of the chapter newsletter.

Mail your renewal:
Wild Ones Rock River Valley
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
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Wild Ones - Rock River Valley Chapter

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Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at

Rock Valley College/Woodward Technology Center, WTC, 3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61114

Special meetings, outings, and events are scheduled periodically and sometimes replace the regular meeting time/place. Contact any officer to confirm information about our next meeting.

Wild Ones Annual Memberships: Household \$37, Associate (limited income/full-time student) \$20, Affiliate Non-Profit Organization or Educator \$90, Business \$250. Your entire membership contribution is tax deductible. Contact Membership Co-Chairs for additional information or to join.

815-627-0344 • Visit our Web site at www.WildOnesRRVC.org

Wild Ones Mission

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