

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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Scan with your Smartphone for more information about Rock River Valley Wild Ones



All articles for the October 2015 newsletter, must be submitted to: Constance@wildonesrrvc.org by September 23, 2015.

Native Gardens to Attract Migrating Birds
September 17, 2015

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

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Millions of birds fly through our region twice yearly. Learn how to make your yard a welcome respite on their long journey by planting natives that will provide food and shelter. Marian Thill, of Cook County, will present a slide presentation showing native shrubs, perennials, and annuals to plant in order to attract migrating birds.

Marian Thill earned her Master Gardener certificate from the Chicago Botanic Garden and became a Certified Naturalist through the Morton Arboretum. She is also a Bird Monitor through the Bird Conservation Network. Marian is currently using her vast wealth of knowledge to educate children and adults on how to use native plantings to attract birds and butterflies to local gardens.

Marian has over 30 years of gardening experience. Her yard is a certified wildlife habitat through both the National Wildlife Federation and the National Audubon Society. It is frequently featured in newspapers and magazines, and is a favorite destination for garden-walk programs. Despite living within walking distance of the Edens Expressway, her yard has attracted over 75 species of birds and over 20 species of butterflies.

Whether you have a small native garden or a sprawling natural landscape, you'll leave Marian's presentation inspired and prepared to invite someone new to your backyard!

This program is free and open to the public. Call 815-627-0344 for more information.



Ginnie Watson and other attendees at the 2015 Wild Ones Natinal Conference

Message from the Co-President Ginnie Watson



Donna VanBuecken recognized for her years of service



Ginnie Watson

photo by Jon McGinty

Our Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter would not exist without our parent national organization, Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd. We are sanctioned and chartered by them, and receive our necessary insurance liability coverage through them; they provide us with brochures, pamphlets, and other print material; and offer support and inspiration whenever we need it. Best of all, we are able to network with nearly 4,000 other like-minded members to

help keep our programs fresh, our ideas on the cutting edge, and our members engaged and interested. The recent Wild Ones 2015 annual conference, *Flight of the Monarch*, August 14-16, is an example of just how well that works. Lenae Weichel, fellow co-president, and I attended and found a weekend filled with good food, good friends, and excellent breakout sessions geared toward improving our chapters in several areas.

Friday sessions were aimed at the national board, but all participants were invited to join in. It gave chapter representatives the opportunity to see what the national board has been up to. The day began with a national board development workshop led by Jamie Fuerst, Marketing Specialist, who discussed social networking and the value it holds for our organization. Next, Financial Planning and Goals, presented by Bill Geenan, treasurer of SCORE Fox Cities, schooled us on how to improve board financial management.

The national board meeting followed, led by president Tim Lewis. The executive committee was nominated and elected, with Tim continuing as president.

Following a delicious south-of-the border buffet, Tim Lewis formally welcomed us all to the sixth annual conference to be held at the W.I.L.D Center. Bret Rappaport spoke about Lori Otto and his personal relationship with her. The keynote speaker for the evening program was Bill Berry, author of *Banning DDT: How Citizen Activists in Wisconsin Led the Way*. This, of course, was an in-depth discussion of the actions of Lorrie Otto, the inspiration behind Wild Ones, and her cohorts at the Citizens Natural Resources Association

Message from the Co-President (cont'd)



(CNRA). These events took place in the Little Tent on the Prairie, a large “circus” tent set up next to the magnificently restored W.I.L.D. Center prairie. (Stay tuned for the new name of the prairie!)

Most of the Saturday and Sunday events took place in the tent, where we were all thankful there was any breeze at all. HOT! These sessions were aimed at chapter representatives, and the resulting discussions focused on ways to improve our chapters. Topics included How to Set Up a Speakers Bureau; Managing and Strategizing for Social Media; How to Be a Citizen Scientist; Financial Planning and Budgeting; and, finally, Transitioning New Board Members.

After lunch, Tim opened the annual membership meeting with *Citations for Distinguished Service* given to Janice Hand, Marj Lundy, retiring Joan Rudolph, and Donna VanBuecken. Donna, who has given us 17 years of excellent service as our first executive director, is also retiring and the search was on for her replacement. The final two candidates were interviewed this weekend and a decision had been made a few days after the interviews. The membership was brought up to date on the national board’s *strategic plan*, Catherine Zimmerman’s *Hometown Habitat* project (<http://themeadowproject.com>), the fact that the W.I.L.D. Center is now an Airbnb

*Karen Oberhauser, honorary director,
discusses a monarch*

site (www.Airbnb.com), our partnership with *The Nature Conservancy* (Go Wild with Native Gardening – Google it!), the *Million Pollinator Garden Challenge* (www.millionpollinatorgardens.org), and the *Jens Jensen: The Living Green EXPERIENCE* video by Viva Lundin Productions. We also learned of the West Cook Chapter’s efforts to create a *regional habitat corridor*, as promoted by Doug Tallamy.

As always, the annual conference was a real learning experience, but the highlight of the weekend had nothing to do with workshops or board development. This was Donna VanBuecken’s last conference as Wild Ones Executive Director. The tent was a full house as Donna was honored for her tremendous service, years of meticulous attention to detail, and acts of what can only be described as love...on our behalf. To express our love for her, the planted areas surrounding the W.I.L.D. Center are forevermore to be known as *The Donna VanBuecken Prairie & Native Plant Gardens*. A sign to that effect has been created and will be appropriately placed at the W.I.L.D. Center.

Donna, we will miss you, and thanks for everything!

August Meeting Recap Cynthia Nelson

photos by Sharon Boehlefeld

Get More from Your Native Landscape with Permaculture



Judy and Jack Speer practice what they teach at Small Waters Education in McHenry County. Their journey started in Chicago 20 years ago with native plantings accompanying their vegetable plot. It wasn't long before wildlife started visiting their yard. After witnessing the effects of development, including the loss and fragmentation of wildlife

habitat, they decided to acquire some land to protect and restore. They left Chicago and moved to their current location on a 7-acre parcel of land with an oak savanna at the headwaters of Nippersink Creek in McHenry County. They volunteered with the McHenry County Conservation District, where they learned about habitat restoration in the county's natural areas. They were also interested in learning about the natural history of the area and about the practices of the people who were living off the land prior to European settlement.

Interest in getting sustenance from their land, as well as in creating habitat for wildlife, led to further studies, including a permaculture design course. Bill Mollison and David Holmgren coined the portmanteau term permaculture, which combines "permanent" and "agriculture". The system aims to develop sustainable resources that use existing ecosystems or incorporate patterns found in nature to develop ecosystems. There are three core tenets of permaculture: care for the earth, care for people, and fair share. The principle of fair share is to take what is needed and reinvest the surplus. In the natural world there is often surplus. An oak tree will produce thousands of acorns, few of which will become trees. But the "surplus" of seeds is a source of food for wildlife, as well as a source of nutrients for the soil as the plant material breaks down. Acting consistently with this principle implies considering how to invest one's own time and energy, as well as how to make use of external resources.

The principles of permaculture design guide the decisions about the work Judy and Jack do on their property. They value both traditional wisdom and

science, and have learned about their land through continual observation over the years. Taking the time to engage with the area will aid in finding appropriate solutions. They considered the maxim that resources should be collected when they are abundant and used when they are needed, when deciding how to approach a problem with excess water around their house after heavy rains. In addition to removing some plastic ground cover, they redirected drainage from the gutters and downspouts to a trench in which they planted natives that could tolerate periods of flooding. Efficient energy design includes a consideration of one's own workload, such as the number of steps one has to take for various activities. Being able to walk a few steps out of one's kitchen to pick some salad greens or snip some herbs is energy efficient. Salad greens and herbs, as well as soft fruits such as strawberries and raspberries, benefit from more frequent inspection and attention—so these plants are well-sited along a path to the kitchen door. Plants requiring less frequent maintenance should not be so far from the house that they are neglected. Judy and Jack's first attempt at a forest garden was overgrown within a couple of years because it was too many steps away from their door. Their second try, sited within easy distance of their house, was much more successful.

An edible forest garden, also called a food forest, consists of multiple layers of plants that can provide a variety of habitats and harvests. Layers of plantings can include the canopy, understory trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants, the soil surface and groundcover, the underground layer, and a vertical layer of vines and climbers. It is an interesting challenge to see how many different functions can be stacked within an area. There are many functions of plants, including providing nectar, serving as larval hosts to butterflies and moths, providing cover for wildlife, suppressing undesirable plants in an area, and providing food for the table. The design of a forest garden should include relationships that are found in natural ecosystems. Plants that are commonly found together are referred to as a plant community. In addition to sharing particular requirements, they may be mutually beneficial in their interactions with each other and with wildlife populations. Some existing areas are able to be improved and enhanced, but some require removing the existing vegetation. When Judy and Jack cleared the vegetation in an area, they implemented energy cycling by chipping branches for mulch, stacking logs for habitat, and using buckthorn in their wood-burning stove. They laid a layer of cardboard on wet ground which they sprinkled down before adding about 4 inches of woodchip mulch. They planted trees in holes cut through the cardboard. As they were planting butternut trees, they used Swink and

August Meeting Recap (cont'd)

Wilhelm (1994) to learn about the butternut tree community in order to decide on what else to plant.

An old oak tree growing in the same area – but not shading – their vegetable garden, was the inspiration for planting a vegetable garden in an oak savanna. The principle of relative location in design is that the location of elements in relation to each other is important. After a degraded area near a stand of oaks was bulldozed, they planted a vegetable garden along with seeds for savanna plants that they acquired at their local seed exchange. Their vegetables are doing well, and they are seeing birds and other wildlife in the area. There are undoubtedly many interrelationships among the plants and animals in this oak savanna on their property. Those who don't have an acreage to work with are still encouraged to apply principles and practices of permaculture to create attractive and productive edible landscaping.



Floyd Swink and Gerould Wilhelm (1994), *Plants of the Chicago Region, 4th edition*. Indiana Academy of Science.

SmallWatersorg.doodlekit.com has resources and links on permaculture.



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 August 13, 2015 meeting, include the following.

- The Transition Committee has proposed a new board structure, which was approved at the August meeting.
- The chapter is actively looking for persons to fill the volunteer positions of Woodland Plant Sale Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator.
- The committee which oversaw the chapter's 2014 yard tour will be reconvened to consider coordinating a similar event for 2016.
- The next board meeting will be Thursday, October 8 at 6:00 p.m., location to be determined. The meeting officially starts at 6:00 p.m., but those attending are welcome to come at 5:00 for dinner and social time. All chapter members are welcome and invited to attend board meetings.

Merchandise Must-Haves Cynthia Chmell, Merchandise Coordinator

Essential Accessories for Wild Ones and Master Naturalists!

Field Bag by Pájaro
This is the best field bag available and is made in the U.S.A. The handy and convenient features make this a must-have accessory for anyone using field guides. It comes with both a shoulder strap and a belt loop. Great for Master Naturalist training – tell your MN friends! **\$35.00**



Ticked Off
Simply the best and easiest tick remover ever! And made in the U.S.A. Everyone who has bought it raves about it! **\$10.00**



Lenae Weichel learns about monarch butterflies at the national conference

Audience at the August meeting



Membership Update Shey Lowman, Membership Co-Chair

A membership e-form and our membership brochure describing the benefits of membership are both available on the chapter website (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. Go ahead and rack up your rewards points and we all win. We appreciate your support!

219 memberships as of August 23, 2015

Welcome to our new members!

David Olson, Rockford, IL
Lexa Mercer and Jim Jost, Winnebago, IL

All 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!

71 attended the August meeting, including 14 guests. Two of our guests were from the Illinois Prairie Chapter in Bloomington, IL; thank you, Sherrie and Jan for coming!

A big thank you to our August meeting volunteers!

Greeters: Janaan Lewis, Janet Giesen
Refreshments: Anita Johnson, Cynthia Nelson
AV/Sound Equipment: Bob Arevalo
Meeting Recap for the Newsletter: Cynthia Nelson
Photographer: Sharon Boehlefeld
Library Assistants: Cathy Johnson, Karen Matz

Anniversaries

Congratulations to this month's loyal members!

5 Years

Brett & Margret Hanson, Belvidere, IL

It is preferred that renewal memberships be sent directly to the chapter for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. Remember, your dues include membership in both National Wild Ones and our chapter. 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 from the chapter 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. Email or call 8156270343 if you have any questions about membership.

Thirty percent of all dues paid (about \$11.10 per membership) is 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 continuing support!

2015 Chapter Programs and Events

September 17 7:00-9:00 pm	Native Gardens to Attract Migrating Birds	Marian Thill	Rock Valley College Woodward Technology Center
September	Native Tree & Shrub Sale Orders taken until September 26	John Peterson Tree and Shrub Sale Coordinator	815-979-8539 john@wildonesrrvc.org
October 15 7:00-9:00 pm	Common Invaders: How to ID and Manage Invasive Species	Cathy McGlynn Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Program, Chicago Botanic Garden	Rock Valley College Woodward Technology Center
November 19 7:00-9:00 pm	Pot Luck and Seed Exchange Members only: All members welcome with or without seeds. Bring a dish to share.		TBD
December	No Meeting-Happy Holidays!		

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.
Please contact Jamie Johannsen 815-494-6977 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 **9/1/2015**, 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 of the chapter newsletter.

Mail your renewal:

Wild Ones Rock River Valley
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Wild Ones - Rock River Valley Chapter

Board of Directors and Chairs

Co-Presidents: Ginnie Watson 815-398-0138
ginnie@wildonesrrvc.org
Lenae Weichel 815-282-5482
lenae@wildonesrrvc.org

Vice President: Jerry Paulson 815-222-4414
jerry@wildonesrrvc.org

Secretary: Cathy Johnson 815-978-0865
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Treasurer: Janet Giesen 815-899-6139
janet@wildonesrrvc.org

Membership Chair: Shey Lowman
815-757-4456 shey@wildonesrrvc.org

Newsletter Chair: Pambi Camacho
815-332-7637 pambi@wildonesrrvc.org

Plant Rescues & Seed Collection Chair:
Mary Anne Mathwich 815 721-5187.
maryanne@wildonesrrvc.org

Program Chair: Jamie Johanssen
815-494-6977 jamie@wildonesrrvc.org

Show Me/Help Me Chair:
Claudia Fleeman 815-985-5158
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Youth Education & Grants Chair:
Kim Lowman Vollmer 815-397-6044
kim@wildonesrrvc.org

Appointed Coordinators
Woodland Plant Sale Coordinator:
Barbara Flores 815-289-8602
barbara@wildonesrrvc.org

Prairie Plant Sale Coordinators:
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rick@wildonesrrvc.org
Deb Freiman 815-871-7424
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Tree & Shrub Sale Coordinator: John Peterson
815-979-8539 john@wildonesrrvc.org

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815-282-0316 constance@wildonesrrvc.org

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Library Coordinator: Ginnie Watson
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Mentor Coordinator: Melanie Costello
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Merchandise Coordinator:
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815-985-4064 doreen@wildonesrrvc.org

Volunteer Coordinator: Cynthia Nelson
815-758-8978 cynthia@wildonesrrvc.org

Website Coordinator: Shey Lowman
815-757-4456 shey@wildonesrrvc.org

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. 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 • Join online with any major credit card 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.