

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

Inside this Issue:

Message from the President	2
April Meeting Recap	3-5
Show Me Help Me	6
Chapter Calendar	7
Membership	7
Chapter Contact Information	8

Pollinators and Other Beneficial Insects in Gardens and Prairies

Thursday, May 16, 2019

Location: Rock Valley College
Physical Education Center PEC0110 (lower level)
3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, 61114

Time: 7:00 p.m.

www.wildonesrrvc.org



www.facebook.com/wildonesrockrivervalley



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



All articles for the June 2019 newsletter, must be submitted to:

Constance@wildonesrrvc.org
by May 23, 2019.



Learn about the native bees, wasps, flies, and beetles that benefit your native plantings - as pollinators and as predators of pest insects that help keep your plantings in natural balance and pesticide free. The program includes information about plants they prefer and practices to foster them.

Jennifer Lazewski is a UW-Extension volunteer with the Southeast Wisconsin Master Gardener Association and the founder of its Pollinator Group. An experienced butterfly and hummingbird gardener who has hosted a rare Anna's hummingbird, she is now focusing her efforts on the many native bees and beneficial insects that increasingly visit her small, suburban yard.

This program is free and open to the public.
For more information, call (779) 537.8939.

Message from the President Constance McCarthy



Constance McCarthy

photo by Tim Lewis

The Best Laid Plans...

Many thanks to all of you for your patience regarding the brochure for our chapter's annual native plant sale. Due to unanticipated production problems, the brochure went out much later than it normally does. Next year, things will surely go much more smoothly.

After advance orders from customers are filled,

all remaining plants will be available for sale to chapter members and public alike on Friday, May 17 (3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.) and Saturday, May 18 (9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) at the Paulson Farm, 4601 Paulson Rd., Caledonia (across from the Northeast YMCA). If you have any questions, please contact one of the sale coordinators: Cynthia Chmell at (815) 969.7435 or Bobbie Lambiotte at (815) 398.6257. The best way to ensure that you get the plants you want is by placing an advance order, as these are filled first (and in the order received - a further incentive to get your orders in as soon as possible).

This sale is our chapter's main fundraiser for the year, so please help us to spread the word. The vast majority of these plants are not available for sale from any local nurseries, so this is an opportunity not to be missed by those wanting to add native plants to their home or business landscape, school prairie, etc.

Our first show me-help me event of 2019 will also be taking place the same weekend as the plant sale pick-up dates. However, the pick-up and public sale take place on both Friday evening and Saturday morning and afternoon. Fortunately, the show me-help me event takes place on Saturday morning, so there is still plenty of time to hit the plant sale either Friday or Saturday afternoon.

For those of you who have never been on a show me-help me event, they are great learning opportunities. I am amazed at some of our chapter members who are virtual walking encyclopedias of knowledge about native plants, insects, wildlife, etc. At a show me-help me event, you can see some of these folks in action, offering their suggestions for how to tackle tricky areas in a home landscape, how to attract birds and pollinators, or how to do a controlled burn of an existing prairie - among other things. You will also be able to see how the property owners have gone about creating their existing native plant landscaping and addressing problems they encountered along the way.

Whether you are a newbie or more experienced with natives, you will come away with new knowledge and hopefully inspiration for your own landscape. Feel free to invite a friend to attend with you; although this is a members-only event, members are allowed to bring a guest. If you have never been on a show me-help me event, rest assured that we are a friendly bunch; even if you come by yourself, you will quickly feel at welcomed by the group.

Many thanks to Linda Ricker (show me-help me coordinator) and the participating homeowners for offering us this great learning opportunity and chance to mingle with fellow members.



Ed Foster and Bob Arevelo

April Meeting Recap Cathy Johnson

photos by Tim Lewis



Susan Carpenter

Gardens Full of Life: Inspirations and Challenges

Susan Carpenter is in her seventeenth season as native plant gardener at the University of Wisconsin. She earned her undergraduate degree in biology at Stanford University, and master's degrees in botany and science education from UW-Madison. At the

Arboretum, Susan works with students and community volunteers to manage a four-acre native garden representing the plant communities of southern Wisconsin.

Susan's work in native plant gardening is combined with another of her interests – pollinator conservation and wildlife habitat. She works with students and volunteers to study bumble bees, with particular focus on the endangered rusty patched.

The UW-Madison Arboretum is different from other Arboretums; as part of the university, it's a teaching and research facility, but unlike other teaching and research facilities, it encompasses 1,200 acres. The Arboretum has a variety of components, including ornamental plants, a children's garden, and much more, with the Curtis Prairie just to the south of the visitor center. Susan shared some photos of the Arboretum and its various component gardens and encouraged the audience to come visit, but to avoid the rush hour, as delays during peak traffic in the morning or afternoon rushes can add significant travel time just to a trip across town.

Susan says that she has especially enjoyed working in the native gardens which were designed by landscape architect and former landscape architecture professor Darrel Morrison, more than 20 years ago. Although Morrison has traveled to many places and designed other projects, he has remained involved with the UW-Madison Arboretum over the years, and says that the UW-Madison Arboretum is his favorite project. Today he is living in Madison again and writing a book about his life in landscape architecture. Morrison arrived at UW-Madison as a young college student, intent on studying traditional landscaping, but his focus changed during his years there, as

he was influenced greatly by the natural areas surrounding the university.

Susan began her talk with some words she feels best describe native plant gardens:

Healthy and diverse. Native plant gardens typically incorporate a much greater variety of plants and species than a traditional ornamental garden.

Full of life. A native plant garden contains not only plants, but the whole food web, and it doesn't take long for this to be established.

Sustainable. The predominant meaning of this is maintainable with low inputs. A native plant garden does not require a lot of mowing or the addition of chemicals, or even a lot of water. The Arboretum does not use fertilizer, insecticides, or herbicides, with the exception of an occasional spot treatment for something invasive, such as crown vetch, and uses very little water, other than at the time of planting. The use of fertilizer in a native garden primarily serves to help the weeds.

Of a place. When you see the plants in a native garden, you know where you are. The plants are recognizable as being representative of the area and are adapted to the climate and soil of that area.

Always changing. As native plants grow during a season and over the years, they change and even move around over time.

Fascinating. There is always something new and different in a native plant garden. These changes and new things lead to observations and questions that make the gardening process interesting and stimulating.

Getting Started

To begin, Susan displayed drawings, made by hand by Darrel Morrison, that provided the plans for the various gardens in the Arboretum. Those drawings were what Susan worked from in planting the native gardens and bringing them to fruition. The plans show the design principles Morrison used, including curved lines, lots of variety, and places to go and explore. They incorporate the use of shadow and light, and curved paths that lead into spaces that draw visitors in.

The plant photos Susan began with were some of the more colorful ones found in the Arboretum's native plant garden in mid- to late summer, including cardinal plant, Culver's root, black-eyed

April Meeting Recap (cont'd)



The April meeting audience featuring Susan Carpenter.

Susan, mountain mint, and purple giant hyssop. In designing your own garden, you could use some of these same plants, or select others that you love.

Among the plant and Arboretum photos, Susan pointed out a picture of an area created as a monument to the Civilian Conservation Corps and dedicated with a plaque on the 50th anniversary of the CCC. The young men in the CCC who lived in an encampment there provided the labor in the 1930s that built much of the infrastructure of the Arboretum, including stone masonry and prairie restoration, building construction, and vehicle maintenance and repair.

The native plant garden was started with plants, mostly plugs, not seeds. Over the years, the Arboretum staff have received many comments about the height of the mesic and dry-mesic garden area. Susan was asked how more conservative, or shorter versions of grasses and plants in the Arboretum could be used in home gardens, especially in small spaces. The Arboretum responded to these questions by developing a plan that used only four of the shorter native grasses – sideoats grama grass, prairie dropseed, little bluestem, and June grass. Interspersed among those grasses they used different forbs that don't grow very tall, but bloom throughout the season. Susan pointed out that this garden requires a little more maintenance, mainly through weeding, as it's very short and anything that gets in there can get sun. Keeping control of some of the taller forbs, and more vigorous grasses allows the June grass to grow more successfully, as it's a more short-lived and less competitive plant. These trial and error approaches are common in native plant gardening.

Pictures of the mesic prairie area feature some of Susan's favorites – spiderwort, coreopsis, ox-eye and heuchera. This is an area that wasn't actually on the original landscape plan. Darrel had suggested planting it with prairie plant seed, but that plan was changed out of concern that it might not provide the right look around the visitor center. Instead, plants were used, and it looks more like a planned native garden.

The gardens

The Arboretum has several savanna areas, with Hill's oaks and bur oaks. In the Hill's oaks savanna garden, the soil varies from very sandy to heavy clay, and required a lot of work, including the use of a power auger, to plant the shrubs in that area. There was concern that those plants might not survive, but they did and are still there today, 14 years later.

In the bur oak savanna garden the understory holds golden Alexander, wild geranium, and columbine. The bur oaks have done so well that the Arboretum is now having to consider thinning some out.

In the maple garden understory, wild ginger, other wildflowers, and ferns can be found.

Pictures of some of the other prairie plants began with some of those earliest to emerge, including pasque flower, prairie smoke, and shooting star. Susan issued a caveat about rabbits, which will take down entire pasque flower plantings, although they do not do this to the prairie smoke.

Butterfly milkweed displayed a few color variations, from almost yellow to lighter orange, almost yellow, to almost red. Susan has successfully grown these in very mesic spots, though some people say this plant needs a drier soil. White sage can be very aggressive, so you might want to use fewer of those plants, and work them in with other plants that are already well-established and can keep the sage under better control.

Moving on to later in the season, some of the featured plants were silky aster, a shorter aster which can be good in a rock garden or edge area. Bottle gentian needs protection from deer, especially in its early stages, and at the Arboretum they grow well in a wet mesic area, not quite a rain garden. In the late fall, the various prairie grasses, including Indian grass, and big and little bluestem are very showy. Even later in the season, some of the last things to bloom include showy goldenrod,

April Meeting Recap (cont'd)

asters and Riddel's goldenrod.

Extra benefits of native plant gardens

Another benefit of native plant gardens is the habitat that is provided to a wide variety of life. Pollinators, spiders, butterflies, and dragonflies, are just a few examples

The importance of water is accommodated in the Arboretum primarily by rain gardens. Handling water is a huge role that native gardens tackle. Water is conserved for garden use by the designed use of condensate from the Arboretum's air conditioning system. The emergence of cattails in the Arboretum rain gardens has been handled by repeatedly cutting them back as they grow. Susan reported that she had to cut them back each time they try to regrow, up to four times over about four weeks. By the fourth time they are cut back, they've used all their energy to attempt to regrow, and the only thing left is rotted rhizomes. This is another successful avoidance of the use of any chemicals while achieving the goal of getting rid of unwanted plants.

Other plants in the rain garden are red milkweed, common boneset, and angelica. The value of rain gardens was demonstrated last year when the Arboretum experienced an unusual six-inch rainfall which filled the basin of the garden. After one day, the water level was down a foot. On the second day it was down two feet, and by the third day there was just mud at the bottom.

One of the last photos Susan shared was that of a bumble bee that was taken at the Arboretum, which turned out to be a rusty patched. This led to the staff looking more closely at the species of bumble bees at the Arboretum, which generated many other observations and questions still being researched. Susan was fortunate to have gotten a picture of a rusty patched queen, which is the only one of that species that is able to over-winter. The queen emerges late in the summer, mates, then digs herself a hole in the ground and over-winters. Susan encouraged the audience to document species of bees and other pollinators in our own gardens. Some resources for doing this and for gathering more information about bees include Bee Spotter at <https://beespotter.org>, created by the University of Illinois, and Bumble Bee Watch, at <https://www.bumblebeewatch.org/> created by the Xerces Society. In Wisconsin, Bumble Bee Brigade is available at <http://wiatri.net/inventory/bbb/>.



Susan Carpenter and Chris Borre

In closing, Susan summarized her advice for planning native gardens, by emphasizing successional flowering, creating seasonal interest, and using varying and interesting shapes. Grow the 'straight' species, meaning not cultivars, especially when considering what's best for pollinators. Additional ideas for providing a more supportive environment for pollinators include incorporating logs or rocks and retaining leaf litter, maintaining buffer areas, and avoiding the use of landscaping fabric or rocks for mulch. Avoid pesticides, especially the systemic ones. Native plant nurseries are good about not using systemic insecticides, but as demand for native plants grows, there will be places that are less careful about avoiding those insecticides.

Some points from Q & A following the presentation:

- Leaving plant stalks through the winter provides protection for overwintering pollinators.
- Early emerging ground nesting bees gather pollen from willows in bloom. The adults gather the willow pollen for the young and only live for about two weeks post-emergence, while gathering the pollen which feeds the young still in the ground.
- On the Xerces website there is information about neonicotinoids (and much more) <https://xerces.org/pesticides-in-your-garden/>

Show Me-Help Me Event Linda Ricker,

Join us for a spring tour of Roscoe-area properties
Saturday, May 18, 2019 - 9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

Show Me-Help Me Events are a great opportunity for our members – from novice to expert – to experience a variety of native plantings installed by fellow members. Pick up new ideas for yourself and offer ideas to help the property owners solve their restoration dilemmas. The event is for members only (including guests of members). If you are interested in joining the chapter, contact Sallie Krebs, membership coordinator (contact information on the back of this newsletter).

Our first Show Me-Help Me event for 2019 will take place on **Saturday, May 18, beginning at 9:00 a.m.** We will be visiting two properties in the Roscoe area. Both properties are located near the intersection of Burr Oak Rd. and Hedgeapple Ln. in Roscoe. Parking on Hedgeapple Ln. will give you access to both properties, according to Loann Collier our second stop of the day.

The first stop on our event will be at the home of **Dawn and John Skupien, 7335 Burr Oak Rd., Roscoe.** Dawn and John have 24 acres of wet woodland that they began restoring in 2015. Removal of invasives such as honeysuckle, buckthorn, and garlic mustard, has been followed by seeding with savanna/woodland mixes from Prairie Moon Nursery. They have been pleased to find many natives still surviving after the removal of the invasives, but are still working on some issues of stream erosion, flooding, burn challenges, and a washed out bridge. They would appreciate low-cost ideas to solve the erosion problems and any burn strategies anyone can suggest. As it can be a wet area at times, they recommend muck boots. If the ground is dry, parking in the front yard is fine, but if it is wet, street parking is the best option.

Our second stop will be at the home of **Loann Collier, 10761 Hedgeapple Ln, Roscoe,** across Burr Oak Rd. from the Skupien's property. Loann has a 0.9 acre property of sloped sandstone hill planted as a prairie surrounded by trees on both sides. Loann began her restoration of a cornfield almost 40 years ago, planting a prairie where the grass wouldn't grow. Her prairie has many spring flowers such as pasque flower, anemones, ginger, trillium, and shooting stars. She would like to expand the prairie, establish a more secluded woodland area, and revamp the slope in the front yard.

For those who want to visit one more site, we will be close to the **Stone Bridge Forest Preserve**, an in-progress Forest Preserves of Winnebago County hill prairie restoration. The site is accessible from the Stone Bridge Trail, which intersects Burr Oak Rd in Roscoe. Parking is available near the water tower off 6th St. and Harrison. There are no facilities at this site, but it does have a great abundance of native plants.



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). 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!!

215 memberships as of April 23, 2019

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

Kathie Ayres & Ted Ross, Rockford
 Cecilia & Michael Coles, Belvidere
 Jerry Paulson, Caledonia
 Virginia Rous, Rockton
 Ginnie Watson, Rockford

Welcome to our new members!

Michelle DeGraw, Capron
 Paul & Karen Klas, La Crosse WI
 Gloria Powell, 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!

70 attended the April meeting, including at least 6 guests

A big thank you to our March meeting volunteers!

Greeters: Betsy Hoelting, Linda Ricker
Refreshments: Anita Johnson, Laura Sjoquist
AV/Sound Equipment: Bob Arevalo
Meeting Recap: Cathy Johnson
Photographer: Tim Lewis
Library Assistants: Cathy Johnson, Karen Matz

Anniversaries:

20 Years:

Kathie Ayres & Ted Ross, Rockford

15 Years:

Cindy Torrisi, Belvidere

10 Years:

Shirley Angell, Rockford
 Steve Engler, Beloit WI

5 Years:

Cheryl Henry, Roscoe

It is preferred that membership renewals be sent directly to the chapter for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. Remember that your dues include membership in both National Wild Ones and our chapter. Please use the address below:

Sallie Krebs
 Wild Ones Rock River Valley
 7492 Renfro Rd., Cherry Valley, IL 61016

Your expiration date is on your chapter newsletter above your name on the label. 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.

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: membership@wildonesrrvc.org 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!



2019 Chapter Programs and Events

May 16 7:00 p.m	Beneficial Insects in Your Garden	Jennifer Lazewski Master Gardener, expert in native	Rock Valley College PE Ed Center
June 20 7:00 p.m.	Prairie Ethnobotany: People & Plants	Cindy Crosby The Morton Arboretum	Rock Valley College PE Ed Center
July 18 7:00 p.m.	Member Potluck and Natural Yard Tour		

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.
 For more information, contact Lisa Johnson at (779) 537.8939



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 5/1/2019, 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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Rock Valley College, Physical Education Center PEC0110 (lower level), 3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, 61114.

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

Rock River Valley Chapter Board and Coordinators

Board

President: Constance McCarthy
(815) 282.0316 constance@wildonesrrvc.org

Vice President: Jerry Paulson
(815) 222.4414 jerry@wildonesrrvc.org

Secretary: Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865
cathy@wildonesrrvc.org

Treasurer: Janet Giesen (815) 762.5912
janetgiesen@gmail.com

At-Large: Doreen O'Brien (815) 985.4064
doreen@wildonesrrvc.org

At-Large: Kim Lowman Vollmer
(815) 397.6044 kim@wildonesrrvc.org

Coordinators

Membership: Sallie Krebs (815) 627.0343
membership@wildonesrrvc.org

Newsletter-Production: Pambi Camacho
(815) 332.7637 pambi@wildonesrrvc.org

Newsletter-Editorial: Constance McCarthy
(as to the left)

Volunteers: Laura Sjoquist
sjoquist.laura@gmail.com

External Plant Sales: Jane Evans
(815) 399.3787 Constance McCarthy (as to the left)

Native Plant Sale: Cynthia Chmell & Bobbie Lambiotte, (815) 969.7435 & (815) 398.6257

Tree & Shrub Sale: Brian Hale, (815) 289.2384,
moyogi2@gmail.com; Jerry Paulson (as to the left)

Plant Rescues & Seed Collection:
Mary Anne Mathwich (815) 721.5187
maryanne@wildonesrrvc.org

Programs: Lisa Johnson, (815) 965.3433,

lisa.johnson@burpee.org

Youth Education & Grants:
Kim Lowman Vollmer (as to the left)

Booth, FREC rep., website: Tim Lewis
(815) 874.3468 tim@wildonesrrvc.org

Facebook: Sallie Krebs (as to the left)

Library: Ginnie Watson (815) 398.0138
library.rsvc@gmail.com

Mentors: [open position]

Merchandise: Cynthia Chmell
(815) 969.7435 chmell@wildonesrrvc.org

Publicity: Joyce & John Mori,
(815) 484.3657 johnlmori@icloud.com

Show Me/Help Me: Linda Ricker,
(217) 649.3966,
greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com