

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

Inside this Issue:

Message from the President	2
Anne Meyer Tribute, cont.	2
July Meeting	3
What's Blooming?	3
June Program Recap	4-5
Linda Tabb Ricker	6
Tree & Shrub Sale	6
Membership Updates	7
Chapter Contact Info	8

www.wildonesrrvc.org



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All articles for the August 2021 newsletter, must be submitted to: Jerry Paulson at paulsonjerry@aol.com by July 23, 2021

Tribute to Anne Meyer Ginnie Watson

Anne Meyer, Master Gardener, volunteer of the highest order, teacher, Master Naturalist, champion of the environment and all things native, and an inspiration to us all, passed away June 15, 2021. She spent her life in service to others as she sought to improve the environmental condition in and around Rockford, Illinois.



Growing up on a farm near Cherry Valley it was natural for Anne to feel close to nature and to love and value what she found there. In 1972, she took over Enders Greenhouse, started by her grandfather in 1912 and later run by her uncle. So many of us remember relying on Enders for our native plant needs after our chapter plant sale was over for the year.



Indeed, she did! Nygren Wetlands has a large area named after Anne Meyer honoring her for the thousands of plants nurtured in Enders Greenhouse and lovingly planted at Nygren by Anne and her volunteers. According to Northwest Quarterly, Annual Guide 2016 > 25 Local People Who Inspire: "With the help of Boy Scout troops and other volunteers, she's led several successful projects, including 30,000 plants donated to Immanuel Lutheran Church and School in Belvidere and more than 180,000 plants donated to the Natural Land Institute in Rockford." All those plants were propagated and grown by Anne at Enders Greenhouse.

Anne was a consummate teacher, sharing her talents at Rock Valley College, and leader in her quiet, gracious, way. She always led by example; was always the first to put shovel to dirt. Anne never asked more of her volunteers than she was willing to do herself but invariably personally exceeded those expectations. I remember watching, exhausted, as Anne continued to dig out clumps of Canada Goldenrod out at Midway Village. She was not one to point and direct. Anne got down in the dirt with the rest of us, working harder and longer.

Midway Village has several native plant areas showcasing native prairie plants and woodland plants along the walking path. Native wetland plants were added along the stream that runs through Midway



Cont. on page 2

Message from the President Jerry Paulson



Jerry Paulson

Let me introduce you to the newest member of WORRV Chapter's Board, Linda Ricker.

Linda was appointed to the Board at the June Board meeting to replace Ken Kielsmeier whose job schedule prevented him from participating in Board meetings or programs. Linda will continue as Show Me/Help Me coordinator and as a member of the Program Committee. Welcome Linda to the Board.

in-person meetings we want to be able to continue to allow people to join our programs remotely via Zoom or another platform. This will take some effort to work out, but we think it can be done.

It will have to be done without the skillful help of Bob Arevalo, our master of electronics and sound systems for many years. Besides setting up, tearing down and running our sound system at our programs and events, running the computer powerpoint programs, and other things dealing with electronics, Bob served as Board President, chaired the Program Committee and held numerous tours of the restored prairie on his property northwest of Belvidere. He also serves as an education volunteer at Severson Dells Nature Center. He and his wife are selling their house and moving out-of-state to be close to grandchildren. Thank you, Bob and Caroline for everything you have done to promote natural landscaping in northern Illinois. We wish you the best.

We are working on plans to start holding our monthly programs in person by the end of the year, starting with our Membership Potluck and Seed Exchange in November. When we do start

Tribute to Anne Meyer, cont. Ginnie Watson

Village and all around the pond. The work at Midway continues by the volunteers who were so inspired by Anne's knowledge, drive, and work ethic.

Anne Meyer was a teacher, not only by example at her many restorations and through instruction to her many volunteers. Through our local Wild Ones Chapter, Rock River Valley, she led a demonstration and discussion of her native restorations near the Midway Village stream and pond. Anne gave a great program and influenced so many people!

Our Wild Ones Chapter was founded on July 1, 1993 and was chartered July 1, 1994. Having joined Wild Ones on May 4, 1994, Anne was a charter member. She remained a member until her death.

Anne became a Master Naturalist in 2010, earning 804 hours since 2011 but frequently forgot to log extra hours. One wonders what they could teach her that she did not already know. That same year she won the Atwood Award. There should have been many more.



She worked with us at Midway Village every Tuesday morning, our regular workday out, but could be found there on Tuesday afternoons, as well. If something needed to be done on a day other than Tuesday, such as plant watering, Anne was there.

Anne Meyer's legacy will continue through her hard work, dedication, and inspiration to all the volunteers who worked with her. It will continue through all the myriad native plants she restored to our local ecosystem. It will continue through us as we have been inspired to work to improve the environmental condition

in and around Rockford, Illinois, and beyond.

Anne Meyer was gentle, tenacious, gracious in word and deed; a determined advocate for all causes environmental. Nature and we have lost a great friend.

Using Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat

Thursday, July 15, 2021

**Time: 7:00 p.m.
via Online Zoom Presentation**

Ken Kielsmeier lives near Oregon, Illinois and has worked on a farm near Leaf River to plant native species to create habitat for birds and other wildlife. He used the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to convert about nine acres of cropland to tallgrass prairie and plant native trees and shrubs on another five acres. The CRP helps farmers convert marginal cropland to wildlife habitat by providing annual rental payments to the landowner. He planted the first CRP field in 2003, adding more land over the years.

Ken will take us on a virtual tour of the CRP plantings and discuss the advantages of using native species to create wildlife habitat. Information on how to connect to the Zoom presentation will be posted on the Chapter website (www.wildonesrrvc.org) and Facebook page, and distributed via email to members prior to the meeting. The program is free and open to the public. For more information call (779) 537-8939.



**Ken Kielsmeier
holding a
Cecropia moth**

What's Blooming? Lenae Weichel

**Ruellia humilis
(Acanthaceae)**

**Acanthus Family
Wild Petunia**

AKA: Hairy Petunia, Hairy Ruellia, Prairie Petunia, Fringeleaf Wild Petunia, Low Wild Petunia, Low Ruellia, Fringeleaf Ruellia.

Despite its common name, this plant is not related to the non-native cultivated petunia. The herbaceous wild petunia is native to most counties in Illinois, including Winnebago, Boone, and Ogle and is found in open woods, prairies, and on limestone bluffs. It has a full growing habit with opposite, hairy, oblong to lanceolate, green leaves and hairy stems and, when mature, sprawls up to 2 feet tall and 3 feet wide. The tubular, funnel-shaped, lavender blooms



have 5 rounded petals with dark purple lines at the center and each last only one day but the plants generally bloom from late May or early June through the summer and into early fall. It

grows in full sun to part shade and generally does best in dry to medium moisture levels; excelling in drought conditions and sandy/rocky soils. It is also fire-adapted.

The showy flowers attract butterflies, long- and short-tongued bees, and syrphid flies for pollen and nectar (as well as providing lasting interest) and the foliage is pleasant even when the plant is not in bloom. Wild petunia is the larval food plant for the Common Buckeye butterfly (*Junonia coenia*) and can also appeal to hummingbirds and sphinx moths.

The genus is named for Jean de la Ruelle, a French herbalist who served the King of France as physician in the early 1500s. Humilis indicates its low-growing nature. Wild petunia reseeds readily but it not aggressive. It is deer and rabbit resistant which makes it a good candidate for those difficult areas.

Photos by Lenae Weichel



Recap of June Presentation

Lisa Johnson

Frequent Fliers: Dragonflies and Damselflies

On Thursday, June 17th Cindy Crosby gave us an inspiring program on dragonflies and damselflies. She said that by the end of the program we would be so excited about these insects that we will look for them everywhere. She was right!

Cindy is a Wild Ones member in the DuPage Chapter where she learned a lot about native plants and ecosystems. Cindy loves native plants, 70% of her yard is planted in natives. She says it is a journey and she is always learning and adding more. This year it's shrubs that she is adding to her yard. She also loves to write about the natural world, especially the Tallgrass Prairie. She has written several books including *Tallgrass Conversations: In Search of the Prairie Spirit* with co-author Thomas Dean and *The Tallgrass Prairie: An Introduction*.

Her latest book is *Chasing Dragonflies: A Natural, Cultural, and Personal History*. Most of her books can be purchased through Northwestern University Press.

Cindy chases dragonflies at the Schulenberg Prairie at the Morton Arboretum, where she has four routes that she follows as well as overseeing 13 other monitors. She also has routes at Nachusa Grassland (a great place to see native plants), and oversees 7 monitors there. Cindy mentioned that last Sunday she spotted 262 dragonflies at Schulenberg Prairie.

Cindy believes that no one should be bored—just go outside, there's always something new to see. She also believes that we should share the natural world with the next generation.

In 2018 the cover of the New York Times stated that the "Insect Apocalypse" is here, our insects are disappearing. So why should we care? Insects can inspire us in many ways. The drones that we have now were inspired by dragonflies, which can fly forward, backward, up and down and are very fast. Dragonfly wings have spikes on them, which scientists have found can slow down viruses and may help us fight them. They also tell us about the

health of our waterways, dragonflies are sensitive to temperature changes, and we don't yet know how they will be affected by climate change. They eat mosquitoes and can devour hundreds in a day. They are also beautiful and great to have in our yards.

Dragonflies are also an important part of our cultural history, some cultures believed them to be evil,

while others revered them as heroes.

In Japan the dragonfly was known as the victorious hunter. Dragonflies are also a source of artistic inspiration and show up in many mediums—including paintings, ceramics, drawings, music and poetry, such as Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem, *The Dragon-Fly* (1833).

In some areas insects, including dragonflies, are used as food, they're a good source of protein.



Cindy Crosby Dragonflies are in the Class Insecta, Order Odonata, Infraorder Anisoptera,

Damselflies are in the Infraorder Zygoptera. There are many ways to tell them apart. When resting dragonflies generally hold their wings out flat, while damselflies fold their wings above their back. Dragonflies usually have wide, muscular bodies and are strong fliers, while damselflies have long, thin abdomens and are weaker fliers, they tend to flutter. If you can get a close look at their faces, dragonflies have large eyes which touch or almost touch in the front, damselflies have eyes which are far apart. There are some confusing species in each group: Clubtails are dragonflies which have a thinner abdomen with a club on the end. Spreadwings are damselflies which have a thin abdomen but tend to hold their wings out.

The dragonfly family is very old, fossils of giant dragonflies have been found in Carboniferous rocks from 350 million years ago. Called Meganeura, they had 2.5 foot wingspans. Today there is between 6000-7000 species worldwide and new species are still being found. Recently 80 new species were found in Africa. In Illinois there are about 99 species of dragonflies and 48 species of damselflies. Dragonflies do not sting, but can nip if handled.

Recap of June Presentation, cont. Lisa Johnson

Damselflies were sometimes called Devil's darning needles because of their long, thin abdomens.

Dragonfly and damselfly nymphs live underwater, some species for up to 8 years. Dragonfly larvae have a long, hinged jaw which they can shoot out to catch prey and they move around by shooting air out of their but. When they mature, they climb out of the water up a strong plant stem and molt, emerging as an adult. They have to sit while their exoskeleton and wings dry before they can fly. Adults may live up to 3 weeks. Being insects they have 3 body parts--head, thorax and abdomen. The abdomen has 10 segments, from thorax to tail---knowing that can help with identification. Usually the males are more colorful than the females, and they can look quite different. When mating the male will grab the female behind the head with the claspers on the end of his tail, this is called "in tandem", they can even fly this way. The female will then curve her abdomen around to the base of the males thorax to pick up the sperm, this is called the "mating wheel". Some species lay eggs in water, others in mats of vegetation, the males will guard the laying female to keep other males away.

Sometimes a dragonfly will look like its standing on its head, this is called "obesking" and is used to thermoregulate. Occasionally, large groups of dragonflies will swarm to feed or to migrate, only certain species migrate. Migrants will go south in huge groups but return singly. Some go to the Gulf Coast while others go to South America. Scientists can do isotopic testing of a dragonfly's wings to find out where it hatched.

Cindy showed many colorful pictures of dragonflies and damselflies, identifying each one and pointing out specific characteristics and/or habits of many of them.

There are many things a homeowner can do to attract these amazing insects to your yard. Have a diversity of plants of varying heights. A pond or other water feature will increase the variety of dragonflies you get, be sure to have rocks for the nymphs to hide under and vegetation for them to climb out on, also small shrubs for the adults to hide in.

Dragonflies are great to share with kids, a pool net or butterfly net is a great tool for catch and release

fun. Stokes Beginners Guide to Dragonflies will help get them started. INaturalist can help with ID, while SEEK is a similar program geared more for kids. Either can be loaded onto a smart phone.

Cindy recommended several resources for those who are interested in learning more about dragonflies and damselflies:

- *Chasing Dragonflies: A Natural, Cultural, and Personal History* by Cindy Crosby (can also be ordered direct from Northwestern University Press)
- *Dragonflies of the North Woods* by Kurt Mead (third edition)
- *Damselflies of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan* by Robert Dubois (second edition)
- *Damselflies of Chicagoland* by Marla Garrison (free online guide: <https://fieldguides.fieldmuseum.org/guides/guide/388>)
- *Stokes Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies* by Blair Nikula, et al.
- *Dragonflies and Damselflies: A Natural History* by Dennis Paulson
- *A Dazzle of Dragonflies* by Forrest Mitchell and James Lasswell
- *Dragonflies: Magnificent Creatures of Water, Air and Land* by Pieter Van Dokkum
- *Dragonflies: Q&A Guide - Fascinating Facts About their Life in the Wild* by Ann Cooper

Online resources:

- Cindy' Crosby's "Tuesdays in the Tallgrass" blog on Wordpress - frequent postings about dragonflies and tallgrass prairie in Illinois. <https://www.Tuesdaysinthetallgrass.wordpress.com>
- Nature is My Therapy: Kim Smith <https://natureismytherapy.com>
- Dragonfly Society of the Americas Odonata Central: <https://www.odonatacentral.org/#/>
- Illinois State Museum's list of local species, plus status: <http://www.museum.state.il.us/research/entomology/status.html>

Linda Tabb Ricker

Linda Tabb Ricker has been planting things since the early 1960s. She grew up on a 3/4 acre property where her parents grew most of the fruits and vegetables they ate. She was given the task of planting some of the flower gardens with seeds her mom ordered from seed catalogues every January.

She comes by her love of gardening honestly, from her mom, from a great-great aunt who showed her how to snap the dragon mouths on snapdragons in her Chicago garden, and from a grandfather who came from England, aspiring to go to work at Kew Gardens, but ending up in the United States, growing beautiful yellow roses, lily of the valley and fighting the jackrabbits for his strawberries.

She earned an Associate degree in ornamental horticulture as well as certificates in landscape design and floriculture from Metropolitan Technical Community College in Omaha, Nebraska, and then went to the University of Illinois in Champaign to get a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture. After raising three children, she finally finished in May of 2010.

Back in Champaign again in 2014, she discovered the Master Naturalist program and finished her training in the same year. Always an observer of nature, after moving to the Rockford area in 2016, she discovered the Wild Ones Rock River Valley chapter and has

been a member ever since.

Working for Winnebago County Forest Preserve District in 2017, collecting native plant seeds and then growing plugs to restore various prairies in the area forest preserves, she was able to apply much of what she has learned about native plants.

Using the knowledge gained from the Master Naturalist training and from the enjoyable Wild Ones programs, she is currently creating a small piece of prairie and a woodland garden on her own property in Pecatonica.

Best of all, she has enjoyed connecting with others in the community who value nature's way of doing things that keep the earth in perfect balance.



2021 Tree & Shrub Sale is Coming Up Fast Brian Hale

The inspiration for the sale this year is Douglas Tallamy's new book, *The Nature of Oaks*, and the sale features six different species of native oaks. Oaks are critical species in the Midwest landscape, hosting hundreds of species of insects, which are food and shelter for birds and animals. More species depend on oaks than any other tree.

The plant list is just about finalized, with Purple Chokeberry, *Aronia melanocarpa*, and Nannyberry *Viburnum lentago* back on the sale list, and new this year Coralberry, *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*. Of course, if there are special requests, we will try to



Coralberry

fill them—some species may have only a limited supply.

We also will have a new contact email address this year, treeandshrubsale@gmail.com which will be monitored during the sale, to ensure no emails are missed. We hope to have order forms available by labor day, with the last day to accept orders being September 25th, and pickup of trees October 1st and 2nd. We will accept payment by check or Paypal.

Membership Updates 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!

200 memberships as of June 23, 2021

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

Francie Barnes, Rockford
Janice Christ, Oregon
Ann Whitney, Pecatonica

Welcome to our new member(s)!

Toni Finocchio, Belvidere
Rose Titus, N Riverside
Carol Valaitis, Rockford

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!

Anniversaries:

15 Years:
Barb Kuminowski, Davis

In Memoriam

In memory of our former Wild Ones
Rock River Valley Chapter members
Anne Meyer - Founding Member 1994-2021

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. 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

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 weeks prior to your expiration date.

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 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!

2021 Chapter Programs and Events

August 19 Invasive Species ID and Control | Michael Hansen-Land Care Manager, University of Wisconsin-Morton Arboretum via live Zoom program
7:00 p.m.

September 16 The Ecology of Our Native Oaks / Sarah Michehl, Land Conservancy of McHenry County
7:00 p.m.

October 21 Conservation Planning in the Raccoon Watershed | Kerry Leigh, Natural Land Institute
7:00 p.m.

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 Sallie Krebs
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107

Don't become extinct!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 07/1/2021, 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:

WILD ONES

ATTN: MEMBERSHIP
2285 BUTTE DES MORTS BEACH RD
NEENAH, WI 54912-1274

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

Due to COVID 19 restrictions on gatherings of more than 50 people we are not holding our regular meetings on the third Thursday of the month at Rock Valley College. Instead, we are meeting over ZOOM or 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.

Rock River Valley Chapter Board and Coordinators

BOARD

President: Jerry Paulson
(815) 222.4414 paulsonjerry@aol.com
Immediate Past President: Constance McCarthy
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Secretary: Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865
catijohn_22@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Janet Giesen (815) 762.5912
janetgiesen@gmail.com
Board member at-large:
Kim Lowman Vollmer (815) 397.6044
kimlowvol@aol.com
Board member at-large: Linda Tabb Ricker
(217) 649.3966 greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com

APPOINTED COORDINATORS

Booth coordinator: [open position]

Facebook coordinator: Sallie Krebs (815) 540.4730 membershipworrvc@gmail.com

Library coordinator: Ginnie Watson (815) 398.0138 vsWatson47@aol.com

Membership coordinator: Sallie Krebs (as to the above)

Mentor coordinator: [open position]

Merchandise coordinator: Cynthia Chmell (815) 969.7435 cynthiachmell@gmail.com

Native plant sale: Jane Evans (815) 399-3787 jayevans9985@comcast.net

Newsletter: editorial coordinator: Jamie Johannsen (815) 494-6977 jjohannsen50@gmail.com

Newsletter: production coordinator: Jessie Crow Mermel (815) 955.0653 serendipitree@gmail.com

Plant rescue/seeds coordinator: Mary Anne Mathwich (815) 721.5187 mprairiedock@aol.com

Program committee: Lisa Johnson (chair) (779) 537.8939

lejohanson3804@outlook.com

Mark Luthin (815) 543.7412

m.luthin@comcast.net

Linda Ricker as to the left

Publicity coordinator: Dawn Skupien (815) 262.7864 dawnskupien@gmail.com

Show Me/Help Me coordinator: Linda Tabb Ricker (as to the left)

Tree & shrub sale coordinators: Brian Hale (815) 289.2384 moyogi2@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)