



# Wild Ones<sup>®</sup>

Natural Landscapers, Ltd.

## Rock River Valley Chapter

July, 1999

Monthly Newsletter

Get ready to don the crown of Wild Ones, as we celebrate our 4th annual Native Landscape Tour here in the Rockford area.

This is the grand opportunity to "strut your stuff." You are the emissaries of knowledge to all your friends and neighbors. Why not take full advantage of the chance to share your enthusiasm of the native landscaping movement?

Interest in this, our passion, is steadily increasing, as is evidenced by more nurseries offering native plants. This past spring's Garden show in Chicago featured an exhibit of native plants exclusively. This in contrast to traditional emphasis on "cultivated" species. It was a popular attraction which they plan to expand next year. Even city-folks are getting back to nature!

There are seven jewels in the crown of this summer's bus tour—thanks to generous members of our chapter who have opened their grounds to visitors.



Participants will see the many and varied ways to enhance their yards using native vegetation.

They will learn what can and has been done starting with plants, seeds, or plugs. Each of the seven stops on this year's tour has its own unique personality.

If your neighbors are used to a "sterile" yard with nothing but grass and a few pansies, they will be astounded at what they are missing. Treat them to what they could be enjoying.

Whether it be a city lot or large acreage, the living community created with native species includes butterflies, birds, insects, frogs, toads and other delightful critters in addition to the plants. Keep your eyes open to catch these surprises!

Invite a friend to join you. Be sure to reserve seats SOON as the bus is filling fast. Don't miss out.

# Minutes of the June 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting

## "Visit Enders Greenhouse - Plant Sale plus - Tips on Propagating Plants"

President Sheila Stenger took the floor (or rather, the table) after eager *Wild Ones* members buzzed around Enders Greenhouse, buying as many native plants as they could carry.

Sheila told us about the upcoming Show Me/Help Me Days June 19 and 26, and July 24. She announced that the next national board meeting will be August 14 in Madison with a surprise party in honor of Lorri Otto's 80th birthday. Effective July 1, 1999, the national *Wild Ones* address will be P.O. Box 1274, Appleton, WI 54912-1274. The new toll-free number is 877-FYI-WILD or 877-294-9453.

If you desire, Sheila will send you a copy of the minutes from the last national board meeting. Just give her a call.

Before introducing Jeff Stack and his Latin Minutes, Sheila read an e-mail from Randy Powers of Prairie Future Seed Company. He had been stopped by WI State Troopers and a Narcotics Agent because someone had mistakenly identified the cut leaf ~~coneflower in his van as marijuana!~~ Get the full story from Sheila.

☆ No regular meeting in July.

*Native Landscape Bus Tour: July 31*

Don't miss it! ☆

## JUNE REPORTS

112 HOUSEHOLD MEMBERSHIPS AS OF 6/9/99

ATTENDANCE AT THE MEETING:

40 MEMBERS FROM 30 HOUSEHOLDS

3 GUESTS

TREASURER'S REPORT

JUNE 1, 1999

BALANCE = \$2363.61

SUBMITTED BY FRAN LOWMAN TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN

# LATIN MINUTES

Jeff Stack, presenter

The featured plant in this month is the Ohio spiderwort, *Tradescantia ohioensis*. Ohio spiderwort is a late spring - early summer blooming forb with a blue to purple flower. This is the only local representative of this genus and is a member of the spiderwort (Commelinaceae) family. The spiderworts' genus is named after two botanists instead of a physical characteristic of the plant. John Tradescant (d. 1638) was the gardener for King Charles I of England, and his son John, Jr., was responsible for the introduction of the spiderwort from America to England.

## **Tradescantia (Commelinaceae)**

(John Tradescant, Sr. and Jr., botanists)

Botanical (Latin) Name

Common Name

*Tradescantia ohioensis*

Ohio spiderwort

ohioensis = Ohio

• SHOW ME / HELP ME / SHOW ME / HELP ME / SHOW ME / HELP ME •

These outings have been especially beneficial, as promised!

Sincere thanks to our hosts: Rod Myers, Bruce and Mary Anne Mathwich, Marlene and Wayne McCarter, Roger and Pat Schroder, Roberta Lambiotte, Lowell and Betty Edwards, and Fran Lowman for sharing their properties with us.

None of this would have been possible without the labors of Tracy and Sheila Stenger who planned, organized, mapped and publicized the events. We are indebted to you both.

## *More to Come*

*July 24 — 4 stops  
more in planning for August*

Try to attend  
Come when you can . . .  
Leave when you must

*Get to know fellow members  
and plants, too*

**Come Once . . . you'll be hooked!**

• HELP ME / SHOW ME / HELP ME / SHOW ME / HELP ME / SHOW ME •

# Propagating Plants from Seeds

Enders Greenhouse was established in 1912 by Anne's grandfather. Thirty years ago, Anne started selling native plants which she dug up from her own yard. Now she propagates and sells over 300 native species!

There are several reasons why a person would collect seeds. One is to have your own source for local genotypes. Collecting seed is a way to obtain a plant you can't get otherwise. Sometimes the best way to change a plant's location is to collect seed and sow it in the desired spot. Planting and caring for seed often produces better germination than Mother Nature.

Seed collecting is an all-spring, summer, and fall procedure. To gather seed from early spring ephemerals, mark the plant when it is in bloom. Watch carefully to determine when the seed is ripe. The seed capsule will swell, darken, and be a little dry. Seeds taken too soon might be too moist and become moldy.

Some plants produce exploding seed capsules. To capture seed before it pops — carefully tie a nylon stocking over the seed head just prior to its ripening.

Be aware of plants that produce fruit (Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Blue Cohosh, Solomon's Seal). This type of seed germinates fresh, so don't let it dry out. Gather the seed in a plastic bag. If you can't plant it immediately, keep it moist with damp sphagnum moss.

Many seeds need to be gathered and dried. Collect and store these seeds in a paper bag. Let them dry, or they will mold. If you collect a lot and want to reduce the bulk, sift the seed through a screen. It is handy to have screens of varying sizes of mesh in order to accommodate different seed diameters. *Wild Ones* RRV Chapter has screen sets

for sale. Anne deals with sharp seedheads by doing "The Coneflower Stomp."

Store dry seed in a refrigerator. Leave it there until you are ready to plant. Changes in temperature can be very damaging to the seed.

Every seed has something to keep it from germinating. Try to imitate nature. If the seed falls in the spring but waits to germinate until next year, it needs stratification. If the seed falls and germinates right away, it doesn't need to be stratified.

Some seed needs to be rubbed with sandpaper to wear down the hard seed coat (scarification). New Jersey Tea can be soaked in hot water to expand and crack the seed coat. Gibberellic acid treatment can be used to facilitate easier germination.

Generally speaking, smaller seeds require light before germination can take place. It is not like planting peas in your garden. You need to learn which seeds can be "buried", and which ones have to be sown on top of the soil in order to grow.

*The greenhouse will be open one more growing season, but Anne will still be propagating plants at her home. She invites the challenge of working with new species of native plants. If there is a worthy plant that you would like her to try to propagate for you, or if you know a source for local genotype seed, please let her know.*

Anne  
Meyer  
Owner  
Enders  
Greenhouse



## These are Anne's favorite resource books on propagation:

*Seed Germination Theory and Practice*, Norman C. Deno  
Penn State, 139 Lenor Drive, State College, PA 16801

*Growing and Propagating Wildflowers*, Harry R. Phillips  
University of North Carolina

*Directory of Resources on Wildflowers*, National Council  
of State Garden Clubs, Missouri Botanical Garden

*Prairie Propagation Handbook, 6th edition 1981*  
Harold Rock, Naturalist, Wehr Nature Center  
Whitnall Park, Milwaukee County Department of Parks

*Prairie Moon Catalog*, Alan Wade, (507) 452-1362  
Route 3 Box 163, Winona, MN 55987-9515

## Other suggested references:

*The Prairie Garden*, J Robert Smith, Beatrice Smith  
The University of Wisconsin Press

*Growing Woodland Plants*, Clarence and Eleanor Birdseye  
Oxford University Press

*Pioneering With Wildflowers*, Sen. George Aiken  
Genesee Press, Inc., Rochester, NY

*Hedgemaids and Fairy Candles*, Jack Sanders  
Ragged Mountain Press, Camden, ME

# Calendar of Events



## Programs and Outings for 1999

**Regular Meetings** begin at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month at Jarrett Prairie Center — Byron Forest Preserve 7993 N. River Road, Byron, IL (815) 234-8535  
*Are you planning to join us?*

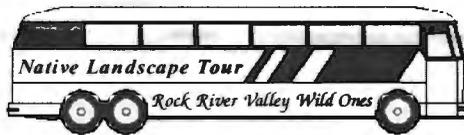
**Show Me/Help Me Days**  
July 24, and more in August, too

**Native Landscape Bus Tour**  
July 31

*Please save these dates*

**JULY 24** — *Show Me/Help Me Day* — for itinerary see insert in this newsletter

**JULY 31** — *No regular meeting this month.*



*Advance Reservations required.*

Call Fran (815) 874-4895.

*Cost: \$8<sup>00</sup> per seat*    *Seats are Limited.*

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Bus Tour of Native Landscapes

### August 19

Dennis Lubbs from *Genesis Nursery* in Tampico, IL

Topic: "Native Grasses, Sedges, and Grass-Like Plants." — Talk & Slide Presentation.

**September 16** — "TBA" — Still in planning stage.

**October** - *Various Saturdays - No regular Thursday meeting.*

Seed collecting — specific times, dates and locations will be announced.

### November 18

Annual Seed exchange — Pot luck dinner and socializing to boot!

**December** — *No meeting.*

regularly  
scheduled

# Next Meeting

## Thursday, August 19

### Jarrett Prairie Center

Byron Forest Preserve  
7993 N. River Road, Byron, IL

Meeting starts at 7:00 pm

"Native Grasses, Sedges, & Grass-Like Plants"  
Slide presentation by Dennis Lubbs, Genesis Nursery

In the meantime . . .

please don't forget to attend our special events:

Native Landscape Bus Tour ♡ Show me/Help me days

## Opportunities:

If any of these pique your interest, call Ray and Diane Edwards for More Details, such as Pre-Registration Forms, Addresses, Speakers List, etc.

## Seminars - Workshops - Conferences -

- |  |   |  |                                   |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| July 9<br>7 am - 3:30 pm<br>\$55.00  | <b>Chicagoland Native Landscaping Conference</b><br><b>College of DuPage</b> Keynote: Stephen Packard<br>5 sessions, each with 5 concurrent areas of interest.<br>Tours of native plantings from late 70's and 80's.  | Glen Ellyn<br>IL                       | (630)<br>942-2706<br>942-2347     |
| <i>Fee includes workshops, handouts, Continental breakfast, coffee, lunch</i><br><i>You can register by phone: (630) 942-3948 MENTION CODE #43591</i><br><i>Sponsored in part by Enders Greenhouse — Anne has registration forms</i> |   |  |                                   |
| July 10<br>2:00 pm<br>FREE to members<br>\$3.00 non-members  | <b>"A Butterfly Celebration"</b> by Susan Dees<br><b>Severson Dells Education Foundation</b><br>Slide show — insect conservation, monitoring,<br>butterfly/moth gardening, rearing, ethics.<br>Followed by a butterfly garden walk, ice cream.  | 8786 Montague Rd<br>Rockford<br>IL     | (815)<br>335-2915<br>Don Miller   |
| Sept. 18<br>10 am - 5 pm<br>FREE   | <b>10<sup>th</sup> Annual "Autumn-on-the-Prairie"</b><br><b>Nachusa Grasslands-Nature Conservancy</b><br>Guided walks — prairie, wetlands, savannas, fens.<br>Horse drawn wagon tours, pioneer-age re-enactment,<br>demonstrations, exhibits, entertainment, raffle,<br>children's tent, live reptiles, grinding indian corn.<br>For sale — nature books, art works, lunch. | 2055 Lowden Rd<br>Franklin Grove<br>IL | (815)<br>456-2340<br>Bill Kleiman |

## LIST OF OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT**

***Tracy & Sheila Stenger***  
624-6076

**VP/PROGRAMS**

***Jeff Stack***  
624-4225

**SECRETARY/NEWSLETTER**

***Ray & Diane Edwards***  
732-6988

**TREAS/MEMBERSHIP**

***Fran Lowman***  
874-4895

## *Wild Ones® - Rock River Valley Chapter*

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm  
Jarrett Prairie Center, Byron Forest Preserve - 7993 N. River Road, Byron, IL  
*Special meetings, outings and events are scheduled periodically and sometimes take precedence  
over regular meeting time/place. Call (815) 234-8535 to confirm information about our next meeting.*

***Wild Ones®***  
**NEWSLETTER**

% Ray & Diane Edwards  
5287 Canfield Road  
Chana, IL 61015

