

**Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.**

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**Look soon for the 2009 Wild Ones Tree & Shrub Sale flyer in your mail!**

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Articles for the August 2009 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor, at [dkcamps@aol.com](mailto:dkcamps@aol.com) by July 23, 2009.

*Evening Social / Yard Tour  
Thursday, July 16, 2009*

**Location: John and Judy Peterson's home**  
14037 Baker Road, Durand, IL

**Time: 7:00-9:00 pm**



*"Peterson's prairie with house and oak savanna in background"*

Photo by Lenae Weichel

Come join us for a relaxing, *members only*, social at the home of John and Judy Peterson located in rural Durand. We will tour their sheep pasture turned prairie and ditch garden full of native ironweed, rosinweed, little bluestem, white and purple prairie clover, liatris, and many other native forbs and grasses, which sway gently in the breeze. John will explain the nest boxes he has placed around the prairie to provide nesting options for our many native bees. John continues to restore the area across the road from their home to native flora while fighting an ongoing battle with reed canary grass and cattails. He has planted several oak trees in the area as he works to establish an oak savanna.

He may even be enticed to show us his little patch of woodland that the birds or critters have so thoughtfully started for him under one of the oak trees surrounding the prairie. And he tells us he doesn't have woods! Guess he forgot to tell nature. Nearer to the house, Judy has a large area dedicated to her organic garden.

Later, we will relax on the Peterson's patio under a canopy of native oak and black walnut trees as we listen to calls of the night birds and chat about all the natural wonders surrounding us. Dress comfortably for the weather. Since we will be outdoors at dusk, remember to bring bug repellent. With our very wet June, the mosquitoes seem to be plentiful this year. Also, bring a chair to sit on and your favorite 'finger food' to share with everyone. Water and soft drinks will be provided. Feel free to bring your own beverage of choice if you wish.

For more information, please contact Kim Risley at (815) 962-4584.

Submitted by Kim Risley,  
V. Pres./Program Chair

## *Message from the President* Constance McCarthy

### Why join? Why renew?

I recently spoke with someone who told me that they had never joined our chapter because they can't ever make it to our monthly meetings at Burpee. I suspect that this may be the unfortunate reason that some folks choose not to renew their membership, or see no need to join Wild Ones in the first place.

This subject was recently discussed at a board meeting, and I'd like to take the opportunity to remind you of the many benefits of maintaining a membership with our chapter. After all, our monthly meetings are technically free and open to the public, so one need not join in order to attend them (although we certainly hope that folks will like what they see and want to be a part of the chapter). But membership dues do help us to bring in **outstanding speakers** from places like the University of Illinois, University of Wisconsin, Morton Arboretum, and the Illinois Natural History Survey, to name a few.

While I may be just a bit biased, I think that our chapter's **newsletter** is right up there with the best of them when it comes to area environmental organizations, especially ones with no paid staff. We are very fortunate to have a talented and dedicated newsletter editor, and her skills (and those of the authors) shine through in each issue. As I hope you've noticed, the newsletter contains an in-depth write-up of the previous educational program, so that even far-away members can learn something each month. Members also receive the quarterly **national journal**—another great educational resource.

Other benefits available only to members include:

- borrowing privileges at our extensive **library** (at monthly meetings)
- invitations to **plant rescues** and the annual **seed exchange** (who doesn't love free plants?)
- invitations to attend and/or be the subject of a **show me/help me** tour (free advice from experienced members on how to landscape your yard with natives)
- inclusion in our **mentor program** (more free advice from experienced members)
- **field trips** (this activity has fallen off a bit over the past few years, but plans are afoot to revive these learning opportunities).

Finally, when you join or renew your membership in our chapter (and the national organization), you support an organization that is active in the environmental community. Our chapter has made donations to Natural Land Institute to support their restoration work. In addition, we provide financial support to the national Seeds for Education grant program, which provides funding for school and nonprofit restoration projects, and we have provided other support for projects at area schools and public areas.

Hopefully, even folks who aren't regular attendees at our monthly meetings will choose to continue to support our chapter, the national organization, and our mission through continued membership in Wild Ones.

## *Membership Update* Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

### 176 memberships on July 1, 2009

#### Welcome New Member

Mary Jane Baucom  
Phil & Carolyn Fulkerson  
Ben & Karen Gallagher

#### Special Thanks to Recent Rock River Valley Chapter Donators

(any amount about the \$30 basic dues)  
John Todt

61 members and visitors attended the June 18th program. Thank you to greeters Lisa Johnson and Terry and Linda Mohaupt. Their assistance is appreciated.

**Note: It is preferred that renewal donations be sent directly to the Chapter's Membership Chair, Marilyn Heneghan, rather than to the national office.** Processing goes quicker this way for the chapter. Your expiration date is on your newsletter and your Journal address label. Thank you.

**"NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES"**  
Please notify Marilyn Heneghan at [informationoptions@att.net](mailto:informationoptions@att.net) when your Insight email address has changed.

Dues payments can be sent either directly to the National Office or to the Chapter Membership Chair, Marilyn Heneghan. Forty percent of the dues paid, regardless of the amount, are shared with Rock River Valley Chapter. Members wishing to make donations specifically for the local chapter, should make a separate payment or so note on their membership application under "Chapter Contribution" and mail to the Chapter Membership Chair. Dues payments, regardless of amount, are considered a donation and are tax deductible.

## 2009 Wild Ones Tree and Shrub Sale John Peterson, Chairs

We're still finalizing this year's tree and shrub selection/availability with the nursery, so if it was not available at time this month's newsletter was mailed, it will be sent you shortly via regular mail and by email for

those of you that prefer to get your newsletters that way. We'll be taking orders through early September, with delivery on September 19. Contact John Peterson at [tacmot@msn.com](mailto:tacmot@msn.com) or call 815-248-2110 with questions.

## Board of Directors in Action Shey Lowman, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Board of Directors, as discussed at the June 11, 2009 meeting, include the following:

- Bev Crittenden has volunteered to be the refreshment coordinator. Contact her at [bevcrit@aol.com](mailto:bevcrit@aol.com) or 815-964-8252 if you are interested in providing refreshments at a future meeting.
- The board undertaking a membership retention effort that includes adding a bright sticker to newsletters listing the benefits of membership, passing out complimentary newsletters whenever using the Wild Ones display at other events, and promoting a chapter recruitment contest.
- Recently there were three successful plant rescues. 10-20 volunteers showed up for each and they were able to rescue at least 10 plants each.
- Through the generosity of our chapter, we were able to get native plants into the landscapes of 4 different schools this spring.
- The annual tree and shrub sale is coming soon. Availability of plants will be known in July.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, August 13, 2009, at Aunt Mary's on State Street in Rockford. The meeting officially starts at 6:30 p.m., but many come at 5:30 to purchase their dinner. All chapter members are welcome and invited to attend board meetings.

### Correction to the June newsletter page 2.

Melanie Costello bought plants for NIU Lorado Taft Field Campus in Oregon. (was printed as Freeport) submitted by Melanie Costello, Outdoor Education Coordinator, Lorado Taft Field Campus, [www.niu.edu/taft](http://www.niu.edu/taft)

## *Cornus alternifolia*

### Pagoda Dogwood

Part shade to morning sun • 15' h x 10 - 15' w Mesic to wet-mesic soil



An excellent understory small multi-stemmed tree. Beautiful lateral branching and white flowers in the spring. The Pagoda likes a few hours of sun in the morning, protection from the west, and moist soil. Birds relish the blue-black fruit in August. Maroon-red fall color. Grows quickly.

## June Meeting Recap Constance McCarthy



**Cynthia McDonnell**

Photo by Tim Lewis

### Nurturing Native Bees

Cynthia McDonnell, a doctoral candidate in Entomology at the University of Illinois, spoke to the chapter about the many aspects of native pollinators in Illinois and what we can do to support them.

In 2006, the National Academy of Sciences published a report based on a study to

determine the state of decline of pollinators, with the aim of making recommendations that take into account the potential impact of the decline on the environment. Honey bees (which are not native to the United States) are managed (monitored and documented) by the USDA, but there is virtually no long-term population data on wild/native pollinators. There is also incomplete knowledge of the taxonomy of native pollinators.

Nevertheless, even before the formal emergence of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD), there was a sense that pollinators were in a state of decline. No definitive cause of CCD has been determined, but there is speculation that it may be the result of a virus, fungal pathogens, or bacteria. Honey bees have also been under assault by varroa mites, tracheal mites, chalkbrood, insecticides, wax moths, and the small hive beetle.

Now there are increasing efforts to determine the actual scope of the decline of native pollinators. There has been a realization that scientists alone cannot accomplish this task, and that public outreach and monitoring by citizens will be vital. The Xerces Society ([www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org)) is at the forefront of public outreach efforts.

In order to be able to monitor and support bees, it's important to understand what is a bee. Bees (also known as apiformes) are part of the Apoidea superfamily. An interesting fact: Sphecid wasps are actually bees (another instance where the common name doesn't correspond with the actual classification). Bees are dependent on pollen from flowers as a protein source for their larvae. They are true vegetarians, unlike the carnivorous wasps.

Form follows function, so that their bodies are adapted for collecting pollen.

There is a significant diversity among bees. Some are solitary, others social. Some are nest builders, others lay their eggs in other nests. Native bees also provide significant benefits to farmers. They are active earlier in spring, before honey bee hives reach a large size. They tend to show fidelity to one crop rather than flying around from one crop to another; this makes them more efficient pollinators for farmers. Bees fly rapidly and can therefore pollinate more plants. Males also pollinate, not only females. Because native bees aren't protecting a hive like honey bees, native bees are not aggressive and their sting is much gentler than that of a honey bee or wasp.

There are five families of bees. Colletidae (e.g. plaster bee) are active in early spring and are ground nesters that resemble wasps. The Andrenidae family has more than 50 species in the central Illinois area. They are solitary ground nesters and are very active pollinators. The Halictidae family (commonly known as sweat bees) are quite small (less than 1cm) and are usually dark colored. Megachilidae (most commonly known as leaf-cutter bees and mason bees) are solitary bees that collect pollen on the surface of the abdomen (rather than on their hind legs, like most other bees). Finally, Apidae (includes carpenter bees and bumblebees) are also mainly solitary bees that make their nests in the soil.

Ms. McDonnell also told the chapter about the Bee Spotter program at the University of Illinois. This is a partnership between citizen-scientists and the professional scientific community that is aimed at educating people about pollinators and engaging them to help collect data about the presence of various pollinators in our state. Data collected is contributed to national efforts to document that status of pollinators.

To participate, go to <http://beespotter.mste.uiuc.edu> and create an account. You can then upload a digital photo of a bee that you've spotted, and record the date and location of that spotting. You then use the very user-friendly resources on the site to identify the bee. All submitted identifications are reviewed by a taxonomist at the university. This program is already showing successes. For example, a bee spotted by a woman on her lunch break turned out to be one that was thought to be no longer present in Illinois.

When trying to identify a bee, the first consideration is

whether it is really a bee. There are some bee mimics (e.g., certain flies), which merely resemble bees but in fact are not. One you're sure that you are looking at an actual bee, consult a bee identification key. These can be quite user-friendly, so don't be intimidated.

The Bee Spotter website also contains resources on bee stings, how to create a bee-friendly garden, the economic importance of bees, the social behavior of bees, and CCD. The site is a tool for community outreach, as well.

For those concerned about conserving native bees, some steps include understanding their biology, providing nesting habitats, stopping the use of harmful pesticides (which can have sublethal effects on bees, such that the bees survive but their hive or behavior is affected), and furnishing suitable crops and wild forage as a food source. A green lawn looks to a bee like what the Sahara Desert looks like to humans. Bees like irregular flowers, hidden nectar, abundant pollen, and a range of colors.

Native plants promote a greater diversity of insects. They support insects at multiple life stages, which is

essential if you want the insects to stick around. For example, if you want butterflies, you must also feed the caterpillars. To attract more bees, providing habitat is also important. Approximately 70% are ground nesters, with 30% nesting in wood or cavities. Nest boxes (which can be purchased or built) are a great way to support solitary bees.

For additional resources, consult the National Pollinator Protection Campaign ([www.nappc.org](http://www.nappc.org)) or the Xerces Society (see above). National Pollinator Week is in late June each year, and folks are encouraged to organize their own activities to help celebrate and promote awareness of pollinators. Finally, the University of Illinois is now home to the very first freestanding science center dedicated to pollinators and the plants that support them, namely the Pollinarium.

Admission is free and open to the public, so stop by next time you're in Urbana-Champaign. For more information, visit [www.life.illinois.edu/pollinarium](http://www.life.illinois.edu/pollinarium).



## 2009 Chapter Programs and Events

Date/Time	Program	Speaker	Location
July 15 – September 12	<b>Native Shrub and Tree Sale</b> Orders taken during this time.	<b>John Peterson</b> Native tree & shrub Sale Chair	
July 16 7:00-9:00 PM	<b>Yard Tour/Evening Social</b>	<b>John &amp; Judy Peterson</b>	14037 Baker Rd Durand, IL 61024 815-248-2110
August 20 7:00-9:00 PM	<b>Secrets to Identifying Our Native Trees</b>	<b>Guy Sternberg</b> Starhill Forest Arboretum	Burpee Museum of Natural History
September 19	<b>Native Tree &amp; Shrub Pickup</b> See brochure for complete details	<b>John Peterson</b> Native Tree & Shrub Sale Chair	Riverfront Museum Park parking lot
September 17 7:00-9:00 PM	<b>Underground Ecology-or, How I Learned to Love Dirt</b>	<b>Dr. Teri Balsler,</b> Assoc. Prof. Earth Sciences	Burpee Museum of Natural History
October 15 7:00-9:00 PM	<b>What is a Burn? How Does Burning Help Our Landscapes?</b>	<b>Andy Bacon</b> Natural Land Institute	Burpee Museum of Natural History
November 19 7:00-9:00 PM	<b>Pot Luck and Seed Exchange</b> <u>All Members only</u> welcome with or without seeds		Burpee Museum of Natural History
December	<b>No Meeting-Happy Holidays!</b>		

**Please check future newsletters for remaining 2009 Events and Activities**

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.

Please contact Kim Risley (815) 962-4584 for more information. 7:00-9:00 PM



ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Pambi Camacho  
6680 Hartwig Drive  
Cherry Valley, IL 61016

*Don't become extinct!*

If the expiration date on the mailing label is **7/1/2009**, 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 to Marilyn Heneghan  
P.O. Box 114, Roscoe, IL 61073

## Wild Ones - Rock River Valley Chapter

### *Board of Directors*

*President:* Constance McCarthy 815-282-0316 (kublai Khan@mac.com) *Newsletter Editor:* Pambi Camacho 815-332-7637 (dkcamps@aol.com)

*Vice President:* Kim Risley 815-962-4584 (rip-cordo1@comcast.net) *Plant Rescue Chair:* John Peterson 815-248-2110 (tacmot@msn.com)

*Secretary:* Shey Lowman 815-757-4456 (slowman@niu.edu)

*Show Me/Help Me Chair:* Lenae Weichel 815-282-5482 (lenae@weichel.org)

*Treasurer:* Janet Giesen 815-899-6139 (giesen@niu.edu)

*Youth Education & Grants Chair:* Kim Lowman Vollmer 815-397-6044 (kimlowvol@aol.com)

*Membership Chair:* Marilyn Heneghan 815-389-7869 (informationoptions@att.net)

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Burpee Museum of Natural History, 737 North Main St., Rockford, IL

*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 Membership: Family \$30, Limited Income/Full-Time Student \$20, Business \$200  
Entire membership contribution is tax deductible. Contact Membership Chair for additional information or to join.

Visit our Web site at [www.for-wild.org/chapters.html](http://www.for-wild.org/chapters.html)

### *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.