

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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*Welcoming the 'Bee' Pollinators
to Our Landscapes
Thursday, June 18, 2009*

Location: Burpee Museum of Natural History
737 N. Main St., Rockford, IL
Time: 7:00–9:00 pm



Bumble bee on bee balm

Photo provided by Eric Mader

The emergence of colony collapse disorder has garnered the public's attention about the health of honeybees and the important role they play in agriculture. Less media attention has been devoted to concerns in the scientific community over the decline of native pollinators around the world. Recently, scientists and policymakers have started to trumpet the call for greater attention to our native pollinators, due to their importance in both agricultural and natural ecosystems. Public participation, in saving our native pollinators, is vital for its success. In fact, the National Academy of Sciences has recommended increased education on pollinators, for all ages, and the incorporation of citizens into monitoring and conservation efforts. When scientists partner with

ecologically-minded organizations, like Wild Ones, then the alarms they have been sounding will transform into specific calls for action that will protect the pollinators on which our livelihoods depend.

Cynthia McDonnell, a doctoral candidate in Entomology at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign will introduce the native pollinators of Illinois, focusing on the bees, the current state of knowledge on their worldwide decline, and questions that remain to be answered. She will then discuss ways to encourage native bees in our backyards, through planting native species and providing nesting sites. Ms. McDonnell's work on pollinator awareness began with a seminar course that lead to

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Articles for the July 2009 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor, at dkcamps@aol.com by June 23, 2009.

Message from the President Constance McCarthy

Create habitat, and the birds will come*

This spring I had the great pleasure of seeing an ovenbird in my yard. I had only seen pictures of this beautiful creature in bird books, and was excited to see one with my own eyes. They are birds of the forest floor, and I would like to think that my restored woodland area helped to attract this beauty to my yard--even if only for a pit stop.

I learned that ovenbirds find their food and build their nests on the ground in wooded areas. They can even use visual clues from the structure of vegetation to judge the quality of potential habitat, which is of course also related to food resources. Researchers have found that ovenbirds can "learn" the locations of high concentrations of food and will then repeatedly visit those sites.

When garlic mustard carpets the forest floor, there is no real space for the ovenbird to build a nest and scavenge for food among the solid sea of plants. Native plants,

however, have spaces in between, and provide a hiding place for a nest, material with which to build that nest, and plenty of insects and other goodies to eat.

Did my efforts really help to attract this mesmerizing creature to my yard? Unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to ask the bird. But I'd bet that I have a better chance of attracting more birds because I don't have a yard that consists 100% of turf grass and closely-trimmed shrubs.

If you build it, they will come!

**Many thanks to Lynda Johnson, birding guru, for her edification!*

Save the date...2009 Wild Ones Native Tree and Shrub Sale

Just a reminder to let you know that the order form for this year's native tree and shrub sale will be included with the July issue of the RRV Wild Ones Chapter newsletter. Orders will be accepted through Saturday, September 12, with plant pick-up the following Saturday morning, September 19 at the Riverfront Museum parking lot on North Main Street.

Plant sales are not limited to Wild Ones members, so please feel free to request extra copies of the sale flyer to pass on to your friends and neighbors.

If you are interested in helping the day of the plant pick up or have any questions, contact John Peterson at 815-248-2110 or www.tacmot@msn.com.

Wild Ones' mission is to have natural landscapes that promote native plants. As stated by National Wild Ones goals, "Wild Ones' primary goals as an organization are to advocate for native plants, restoration of precious ecosystems, and environmental education." By establishing native plants at educational institutions we have the chance to reach so many more people, and especially the young people, who are our future. This is such a valuable way to spend our money, that our Chapter does a wonderful job helping out these projects and supporting them. We did a great job of placing native plants in educational institutions thru both of our spring plant sales this year! With the great help of both plant chairs (Kim Risley and Dianne Stenerson) we managed to place plants in three educational institutions, all of which involved Wild Ones' members. Mary Ann Mathewich purchased plants and went on rescues for plants for Keith School in Rockford. Melanie Costello bought plants for NIU Loreda Taft Field Campus in Freeport. Carla Womack and her school at Big Rock High School in Hinckley. Kyle Wright, an Eagle Scout, bought 148 plants for two projects for is Eagle project at Willowbrook Elementary School in South Beloit, IL. Carly Vollmer's Girl Scout Troop bought approximately 650 plants to establish a butterfly garden at their new green school (LEED Certified)--Willowbrook Elementary School. The Vollmer Family bought approximately 250 plants and did some rescues to establish the Fran Lowman Memorial Garden at Willowbrook Elementary School. Remember you all can help out by starting a small planting at your school or your grandchildren's school, or church. Keep this in mind when you are buying plants next year!

submitted by Kim Lowman Vollmer, Youth Education and Grant Chair

Welcoming the 'Bee' Pollinators to Our Landscapes

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the creation of BeeSpotter, for which she researched the topic, "Creating a Bee-friendly Garden." She will discuss this new opportunity for citizen-scientists to help in the long-term monitoring and conservation of bee populations in Illinois.

Join us for an informative night on one family of pollinators we attract to our yards when we plant native trees and flora and learn how they contribute to the environment in which we live.

This program is free and open to the public.

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

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

Prairie Plant Sale Wrap-up

Kathie Ayres & Dianne Stenerson, Co-Chairs

When Kim Risley started up the Woodland Native Plant Sale this year, she was worried that it might hurt the “regular” plant sale. Quite the contrary, we had a record year,—we even had to rent a U-Haul to pick them all up! Now admittedly, 32 flats of plants were for special school projects. (Way to go, Kim Vollmer, Carla Womack, and Mary Anne Mathwich!) But even not counting those, we held steady with previous averages. Thanks to our chapter,— efforts in the two sales, over 7200 new native plants are growing in the Rock River Valley area!

Proceeds from these sales and the fall Tree and Shrub Sale help support the fine programming and other contributions the chapter provides. Of course, this couldn’t happen without the hard work of a lot of volunteers. Look for these people at future Wild Ones functions and let them know they are appreciated! Our chapter especially owes a big thank you to Anne Meyer, as she makes sure the remaining unsold plants get distributed and planted in Midway Village and other worthy homes.

First Woodland Plant Sale a Success

Kim Risley, Chairs

Wild Ones Rock River Valley chapter has successfully completed its first native woodland plant sale. Fifty-seven people picked up their orders on May 1 and May 2. Over 1,360 new native ferns, grasses, sedges and forbs—including baneberries, large-flowered trillium, Solomon’s seal, and shooting stars – will find their way into the northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin landscape as they are planted.

I would like to extend a special thank you to all the hard-working volunteers who made this first woodland sale the success it was:

Ty Haynes who donated his time and vehicle to pick-up and unload all the plants; new member Sharon Bramel, who helped label the plants and put together the 57 orders before the plant pick-up; all the volunteers who assisted at the plant pick-up – Cathy Schafman, Dianne Stenerson, Don Heneghan, Anita Johnson, John Peterson, Janet Geisen, Doreen O’Brien, Guy Smith, Karen Matz, Barbara Kuminowski, Pat Schubert, Sue Hoople, Ed Foster, and Steve Symes; and last but not least, the volunteers who assisted at the woodland sale – Rita Sullivan, Sharon Bramel, and Jude Wrzesinski.



Sharon Bramel, Janaan Lewis and Kim Risley staff the woodland plant sale.

Photo by Lenae Weichel

On May 9, people who had toured the woodland gardens of members John and Carol Gerrond and Bob and Bev Beebe purchased several more woodland plants. As a result of the sale of extra plants at the time people picked up orders, plus the sale of plants at the woodland tour, an additional 340 plants were added to gardens.

In addition, with the support of members Mary Anne Mathwich, Kim Lowman Vollmer and Melanie Costello, local schools and scout troops purchased and planted 151 of the total native ferns, grasses, sedges and forbs sold. That makes a grand total of over 1,700 plants!

A Call for Plant Needs

Several species of woodland plants sold out early in the sale period. Since woodland plants are often difficult to propagate and grow to sale, quantities were limited. In order to assure a good selection and quantity of plants will be available for next year, pre-orders need to be submitted by the sale chair before the end of August.

Therefore, if anyone knows of any school, scout troop or other community native planting projects that are anticipated for next year or if there are any particular plants you would like to see offered for sale, please contact Dianne Stenerson (815-636-9930 or dstenerson@comcast.net) for prairie plants or Kim Risley (815-962-4584 or rip-cord01@comcast.net) for woodland plants as soon as possible. This will help the chapter meet the anticipated needs of as many as possible when pre-ordering.

May Meeting Recap Cathy Schafman



Dr. Stephen Hill

Photo by Lenae Weichel

Dr. Hill gave us a method of identifying unknown plants. He first emphasized the importance of using the scientific name for a plant as several plants may have the same common name. He limited his discussion to vascular plants - those which have specialized tissue in the stems to conduct liquids. Identification and classification differ. Identification is discovering the name of a plant. Classification is inserting a plant into a hierarchy of relationships.

To begin with, it is very important to observe the plant very closely. Start by assuming it could be anything. Eliminate the possibilities that don't fit. These are the primary methods used to identify a plant:

1. Ask an expert.
2. Use picture books or the internet.
3. Use comparisons in a Herbarium (a collection of dried, pressed specimens).
4. Use keys and descriptions in a Flora or other reference. A key is an outline providing choices among features, or characteristic of an unknown plant. Using a key requires a knowledge of terminology obtained gradually through repetition. The more frequently you use a key, the faster the process becomes. Floras of Illinois would be an example of a good source.
5. Check a Plant Atlas. This tells what county a plant has been found. You can rule out many plants this way.

When observing a plant, these are the important features to note:

1. Major plant groups: Pteridophytes (ferns), Gymnosperms (woody plants with cones and pollen), Monocots, and Dicots. Monocots and Dicots are flowering plants. The following are properties of Monocots: Parallel leaf veins, flower parts in 3's, one seed leaf (cotyledon), and scattered vascular bundles in stem. The following are properties on Dicots: reticulated leaf veins (veins intersect like nets), flower parts in 4's and 5's, two seed leaves (cotyledons), and ringed vascular bundles (such as in tree rings).
2. Plant duration:
 - A. Annual - lives one year
 - B. Biennial - lives two years. The first year, the

plant appears as a rosette of leaves. The second year it sends up a flower structure. Garlic Mustard is an example.

- C. Perennial - They have structures which allow them to live more than 2 years. These include bulbs, woody structures, horizontal underground stems, corms, and tuberous roots.
3. Plant Habit - Is it an herb, vine, shrub, or tree.
4. Plant family. If you have memorized the plant families in your region, it greatly facilitates the use of a plant key. There are 300 plant families world wide, but many fewer in each region.
5. Leaf arrangement - opposite, alternate, whorled, or basal (attached at the base of the plant like dandelions).
6. Leaf type - simple or compound leaves of the following shapes: cordate (heart shaped), ovate (egg shaped), lanceolate (spear shaped). The margins, edges, might be entire, lobed, serrate (knife like), or dentate (tooth like).

Plants are classified by reproductive parts. The following are more plant features to look for especially in flowering plants:

1. Number of floral part: sepals, petals, stamens and pistils.
2. Flower symmetry - radial (more than one plane of symmetry), or bilateral (one line of symmetry)
3. Flower color when fresh
4. Fruit types - capsule, berry, drupes, or hips.
5. Measurements - height, dimension of plant parts
6. Habitat and flowering time.
7. Location

Dr. Hill said very few tools are needed for identifying plants:

1. Floras, and plant manuals with keys or pictures.
2. Metric ruler
3. Hand lens, sharp eyes or a stereomicroscope.
4. Camera capable of close up shots.
5. Experience - Observe closely, and watch a seedling



Paul Crittenden is animated in discussion with Dr. Steven Hill

Photo by Lenae Weichel

develop to adult. Then when you see that seedling again, you will recognize it.

Dr. Hill encouraged us to be very observant like Sherlock Holmes. Identifying plants is not only interesting, but it increases your vocabulary, and observational powers.

Two Plant Rescues in one day—a RRV WO chapter record!

On the morning of Sunday, May 17, more than 20 members of our Wild Ones Chapter gathered on the Westside of Rockford to help rescue native woodland plants in an area that is gradually being developed by the owners. Because of this year's perfect growing season, many of the species were growing in abundance. Most people collected at least dozen plants from among eight or so species, resulting in a total of more than 200 plants that are now safe and growing at their new homes. Our thanks to Wild Ones member, Kim Risley, who, for the third consecutive year, was able to obtain permission for us to rescue plants. Kim was also our on-site woodland plant expert that day and offered her guidance and woodland plant scouting ability to all those present.

Later that same day, Wild Ones members Kim and Carly Vollmer took charge at a local school that had changed administrations and many other things and no longer wanted to care for the native plantings on their property. This was sad news, but members were able to do a plant rescue, which was wonderful. There were woodland and savannah plants. Ten different Wild ones members were able to rescue plants so these plants found new life in homes and at a new school. Our thanks to Kim and Carly for their efforts coordinating that rescue.

submitted by John Peterson, Plant Rescue Chair

Are you interested in participating in a Show Me/Help Me Day this year?

The Show Me/Help Me schedule is being organized for this growing season and we are looking for members who would like us to come to your landscapes! Show Me/Help Me Days are evenings or weekend days when we arrange a tour of several chapter members' yards. We hope each tour will contain both established landscapes ("show me") and yards in-progress or with potential and need of plans ("help me"). Chapter members of all levels of experience and knowledge can participate together to learn and share.

What we need is a selection of landscapes to tour! Here is where you come in. Do you have a yard that you have been working on for a while that is showing the beautiful fruits of your labor? Are you trying to determine what you have, what to do, and how to do it? Or does your landscape represent a little of both scenarios; you have some great things going but need some ideas or information to get other things started? If any of these situations describe yours, your landscape should be on one of our Show Me/Help Me tours!

It matters not whether you have a small city lot or a rambling country estate. Location is also not a big factor because we will try to schedule different events in particular areas so that travel distance is reasonable on each day.

Are you interested? Please contact Lenae Weichel, Show Me/Help Me Chairperson, at [lenaeweichel.org](mailto:lenaeweichel@weichel.org) or 815-282-5482 to volunteer your property or for more information.



Membership Update

Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

173 memberships on June 1, 2009

Welcome New Member

LeeAnn Bridgeland
Shirley Angell
Chris Korte

Special Thanks to Recent Rock River Valley Chapter Donators

(any amount about the \$30 basic dues)
Mary Berve

77 members and visitors at the May 21st program.
A thank you to the program greeters Lisa Johnson.

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 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.

Woodland 'Open Yard' Tours Recap Lenae Weichel

Many came out on a cool, cloudy afternoon to see two spectacular examples of native woodland yards on our first-ever 'open yard' tour. Nearly 100 people visited one or both locations and just under half of the visitors were non-members. Comments from visitors and both locations included how lush and green everything was, how beautiful the blooms were, especially the masses of Virginia bluebells at Gerronds, and what diversity of flora were to be found, especially in Beebe's well-established landscape.



Gerrond Landscape - Ostrich fern and Virginia bluebells dot the forest floor.

Photo by Lenae Weichel

Great thanks go to our hosts for the day, Bob and Bev Beebe and John and Carol Gerrond



Beebe Landscape - Chapter members survey the yard beyond the pond.

Photo by Lenae Weichel

April and May Wild Ones Volunteers Ed Kletecka

April and May were extremely busy months for the Wild Ones. We have had a Woodland Plant Sale, a booth at the Bird Fest, Woodland Open Yard Tours complete with a social afterwards, a Prairie Plant Sale and two plant rescues. All of this takes place with the help of volunteers.

First, Kim Risley chaired our first ever Woodland Plant Sale. Kim wrote an article about her team which appears in this newsletter so I won't repeat the acknowledgments but thank you Kim. The Woodland Plant Sale was a wonderful addition to our activities. Next was Lenae Weichel coordinated the Woodland Open Yard Tours, with help from Mary Anne Mathwich, Ginnie Watson, Rita Sullivan, Kim Risley, Sharon Bramel, Jude Wrzesinski, Ed Foster, and Constance McCarthy. Bob and Bev Beebe and John and Carol Gerrond provided the yards and Larry and Dee Dee McPherson provided the social. *[I am a woodland person and I never turn down a social but I missed everything because I was out of town. I did think about this though, on Sunday. I had a hamburger in honor of the social.]* Next, Tim Lewis and the Bird Fest. Tim's team was John and Judy Peterson, Kirby Doyle, Carla Womack, Guy Smith, Mary Thiesing,

Marcia DeClerk, Steven Hall, and Constance McCarthy. Bird Fest team, thank you. Then the Prairie Plant Sale and this is a big one. This was co-chaired by Dianne Stenerson and Kathie Ayres. These two ladies did a tremendous amount of work because this is our biggest event. Their team was Ginnie Watson, Guy Smith, Sheryl Hall, Karen Matz, Lynn St. John, Rita Sullivan, Sue Hoople, Marcia DeClerk, Anita Johnson, Pat Shubert, John Peterson, Tim Lewis, Janet Giesen, John Gerrond, Kirby Doyle, Steven Hall, Rich Noser, Dick Grambrel, Kim Risley, John Todt, Anne Meyer, Mary Berve and myself. THANK YOU EVERYONE.

And the last of our activities, the Plant Rescues. John Peterson and Kim Risley ran one rescue and Kim and Carly Vollmer ran the other. Thank you for these rescues. They are true treasure hunts.

Rock River Valley chapter of Wild Ones needs lots of people to run our activities. If you are interested in volunteering in the future, contact me at a meeting, call me at home (815) 389 0120 or be sure to fill out the annual Members Survey.

Guy's Corner Guy Smith

Diversity=Complexity=Stability

I've read a great book, *Insects and Gardens: Towards a Garden Ecology*, by Eric Grissell (Timber Press), in which the author explains that when we plant a greater mix of species (increasing the diversity) in our gardens (using local natives, of course), we thereby allow nature to interact within a much more complex system. The number of ways that the species of plants, and their attendant insects (and other animals, too!) interact, increases in geometric proportion to the number of species involved. This increased number of complex interactions acts to stabilize the entire garden's ecology.

You could consider it like an ecological fly-wheel, or gyroscope (like a child's toy top). The more species, the

more massive the system. The more interactions, the faster it turns. The faster it turns, the more stable it becomes. All of the species benefit from the vastly increased complexity of checks and balances: predator and prey, host and parasite, growth and decay, etc.

The entire earth's surface -- all of living nature -- is such a "gyroscope." Let's work at making it more stable by increasing diversity by planting locally native species!

After reading into this meaty book, it becomes ever clearer why the things we do as natural landscapers/Wild Ones matter so much. Do yourself a favor: read this book and pass it on to a friend. It will be well worth your time!

2009 Chapter Programs and Events

| Date/Time | Program | Speaker | Location |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| June 18 7:00-9:00 PM | <i>Welcoming the 'Bee' Pollinators to Our Landscapes</i> | Cynthia McConnell Entomologist Univ. of IL - Champaign | Burpee Museum of Natural History |
| July 15 – September 12 | <i>Native Shrub and Tree Sale</i> Orders taken during this time. | John Peterson Native tree & shrub Sale Chair | |
| July 16 7:00-9:00 PM | <i>Yard Tour/Evening Social</i> | John & Judy Peterson | 14037 Baker Rd Durand, IL 61024 815-248-2110 |
| August 20 7:00-9:00 PM | <i>Secrets to Identifying Our Native Trees</i> | Guy Sternberg Starhill Forest Arboretum | Burpee Museum of Natural History |
| September 19 | <i>Native Tree & Shrub Pickup</i> See brochure for complete details | John Peterson Native Tree & Shrub Sale Chair | Riverfront Museum Park parking lot |
| September 17 7:00-9:00 PM | <i>Underground Ecology-or, How I Learned to Love Dirt</i> | Dr. Teri Balsler, Assoc. Prof. Earth Sciences | Burpee Museum of Natural History |
| October 15 7:00-9:00 PM | <i>What is a Burn? How Does Burning Help Our Landscapes?</i> | Andy Bacon Natural Land Institute | Burpee Museum of Natural History |
| November 19 7:00-9:00 PM | <i>Pot Luck and Seed Exchange</i> <u>All Members only</u> welcome with or without seeds | | Burpee Museum of Natural History |
| December | No Meeting-Happy Holidays! | | |

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 **6/1/2009**, 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@mac.com) *Newsletter Editor:* Pambi Camacho 815-332-7637 (dkcamps@aol.com)

Vice President: Kim Risley 815-962-4584 (rip-cord01@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

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.