

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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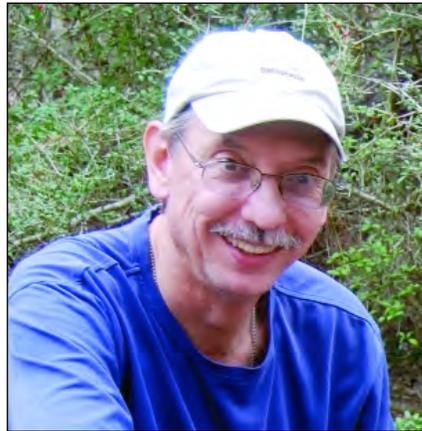
**Woodland
"Open Yard"
Tours
Saturday
May 8, 2010
1 - 4 pm
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FOUR RIVERS
ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION
MEMBER ORGANIZATION

Articles for the June 2010 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor, at: dkcamps@aol.com by May 23, 2010.

Edible Wild Mushrooms of Illinois
Thursday, May 20, 2010

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



The trees are leafing out, our spring flowers have put on quite a colorful show and our prairies are just beginning to wake up. Lately, the woods have been filled with people who alternate walking around with heads bowed searching the ground and furtively looking around to see who, if anyone, is following them. These are the morel hunters! What are they looking for, where do they look? Morel are just one of at least 40 mushrooms that can be found in Illinois and the surrounding states. What are the many mushrooms found in our area? Are they edible or poisonous? How do we tell them apart?

Dr. Gregory M. Mueller will be answer these questions and more at our May meeting. Having received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Southern Illinois University and his Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee, Dr. Mueller's research and teaching activities focus on the biology and conservation of mushrooms and related fungi. He has authored several books and nearly 100 journal articles, and is associated with many organizations, including the Nature Conservancy, the Mycological Society of America, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. In 2009, he co-authored a must-have book for everyone interested in identifying the various mushrooms in Illinois entitled, *Edible Wild Mushrooms of Illinois and Surrounding States*.

Not only are mushrooms enjoyable to eat and fun to hunt for, but they play a vital role in our ecosystem serving as decomposers and symbionts. Instead of being locked in organic matter, fungi keep nutrients for plants in the ecosystem. As a decomposer, they free elements essential to life like carbon and nitrogen. Not only will Dr. Mueller show us what to look for and how to distinguish between the good and the not so good mushrooms, but he will also explain how mushrooms and other fungi affect the plants and animals of our ecosystem.

Join us at our May meeting to learn about these hidden gems of the wild, what their role in our ecosystem is, and how we can find and identify the edible ones.

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

Message from the President Constance McCarthy

Hope springs eternal

he glories of spring are upon us. The first blooms of the season are a solid reminder that winter is behind us, even if some of the chilly temperatures linger from time to time. The blooms on my bloodroot, sharp-lobed hepatica, tiarella (a bit out of our area, but a beauty I couldn't resist), and trillium have been a sight for sore eyes. Even the purely green plants, such as wild ginger and ramps, are signs of the good things to come.

For those who didn't order from our chapter's prairie and woodland plant sales (or those who ordered but are still hungry for more plants), there will likely be some remaining plants for sale at our May meeting at Burpee.

By the time you read this, our chapter will have held its first plant rescue of the year. Out of respect for the property owner, our plant rescues are not broadcast to

the entire chapter. Those contacted were folks who indicated on the annual membership survey that they would like to receive info on plant rescues. If you didn't receive that notice but are interested in participating in future plant rescues, please contact John Peterson, Plant Rescue Chair, at (815) 248.2110 or tacmot@msn.com, so that you can be added to the list.

Plant rescues are a great way to get free native plants that are truly local ecotype. Also, rescues are great learning experiences, as more knowledgeable members help other diggers find and identify desired plants. And don't forget: invitations to plant rescues are a membership benefit. One more reason to join Wild Ones if you're not already a member!

Board of Directors in Action Shey Lowman, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Board of Directors, as discussed at the April 8, 2010 meeting, include the following:

- The Marcus de la fleur presentation, One Drop at a Time, at Klehm in March was very successful with 171 attendees.
- Seeds for Education grants have been restored by national Wild Ones for next year. Earlier this year the grants were put on a one year hiatus due to budget concerns.
- Plant sale orders are right on target for this year. Thank you for your support!
- Our chapter is donating \$1,000 to Severson Dells to assist them with purchasing children's books that are environmentally themed and helping to upgrade a computer.
- The chapter will begin using Constant Contact to generate more effective emails for notifying the membership about chapter events and information. A motion was passed to pay \$126 for a one year subscription.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, June 10, 2010, 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.

Membership Update Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

169 memberships on May 1, 2010

Welcome new member
Judy Letourneau

**Special Thanks to Recent
Rock River Valley Chapter Donators**
(any amount about the \$30 basic dues)
Jeff Stack and Kathy Mielke

80 attended the April program. Thank you to Lisa Johnson and Terry and Linda Mohaupt for greeting members.

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 if you change your email address.

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

Saturday, May 8, 2010 • 1:00 - 4:00 pm *photos provided by Virginia Watson*

Wondering how to make a beautiful garden of your shady yard? Take your time and stroll through two landscapes created using native woodland plants. See how you can take a typical wooded yard (or the deep shade under a tree or two) and create an oasis of your own. Two yards will be open to the public and the homeowners will be on hand to answer questions and share their experiences.

3703 Highcrest Rd (61107): The Watson yard is a great example of what one can do to transition a traditional lawn and garden to one more natural while maintaining beauty and order. Each year, the homeowners replace sections of labor-intensive lawn with a diversity of native plants and find the area improved on multiple levels. Even in areas of deep shade where grass never grew well (or at all), they now have lush plantings that provide visual interest and structure throughout the year. The yard has many large, mature trees as well as shrubs and a wide variety of plantings for both sun and shade and a small but effective rain garden. The owner describes her urban oasis as a "catharsis," a place she goes to "collect [her] thoughts."

3007 Vinton Ave (61101): The Risley landscape fills a large lot that has seen much change in its 80 year history. Situated under a towering canopy of established



maple and box elder trees, you will find a landscape that is evolving as the homeowners do. It includes many trees that were planted following the devastating wind storm some years ago and a wide variety of plants. A winding path will lead you into a cool shade filled with native plants and flowering/fruiting shrubs of all types. You might even spy some of the resident wildlife that is also drawn to this beautiful place or see what in a month will be bowls full of black raspberries planted by the original owners some 75 years ago. All things change, nature among them, but here the homeowners have helped it along.

Woodland Plant Sale: If you are inspired by what you see in these two yards and you want to add some native woodland plants to your own landscape (or if you didn't get a chance to order from our Woodland Plant sale), you might find just what you are looking for at the sale table at 3007 Vinton Ave. A wide variety of native woodland plants will be available for purchase here.

This program is free and open to the public. For additional information contact Lenae Weichel at 815-282-5482 (or 815-962-2725 on the day of the program).



Baneberry, *Mitella diphylla*, Columbine

April Meeting Recap Constance McCarthy

photo by Lenae Weichel

Butterflies in the Garden: Identification of Common Butterflies and How to Attract Them



Janie Grillo

Janie Grillo, a self-taught butterfly enthusiast from St. Charles, was the presenter at our April meeting.

Worldwide, there are over 17,000 species of butterflies, and over 200,000 species of moths. In the United States, there are 780 butterfly species, with 140 being found in Illinois. However, only 20-30 butterfly species are commonly found in Illinois yards and gardens. The largest butterfly in the world is the Queen

Alexandra's birdwing, native to Papua New Guinea and having a wingspan that can exceed 12 inches (yes, inches!). One of the smallest in the world is the western pygmy blue, with a wingspan of only one-fourth of an inch; it can be found in certain parts of the United States. More species are found in Alaska than in Hawaii, and 20 U.S. species are endangered or threatened.

Similar to what was said in *Field of Dreams*, if you provide them with what they need, they will come, no matter how small the area that you have to work with. From plants in containers, all the way to a large prairie or meadow, everyone can attract butterflies to their home landscape if four basic things are provided:

First: a sunny location. It must be above 60 degrees in order for butterflies to fly. Also, most plants favored by butterflies, are sun-loving plants.

Second: trees, shrubs, or brush for cover and protection from predators. These need to be within 100 yards of the food source. While butterfly boxes might look cute and seem nice in principle, butterflies in fact do not like or prefer them.

Third: food sources for both adults and caterpillars. You need to plant for the whole life cycle if you want the butterflies to stick around. Butterflies are near-sighted, so if you only have a small area, it is better to plant a mass of one type of blossom, rather than a wide variety of single plants. Their preferred color range (the colors that they see best) includes pinks, purples, and yellows.

Fourth: water and nutrients. Butterflies can't land in a birdbath or a puddle. Rather, they take in water from damp soil, compost, sand, fireplace ashes, or mulch. Top

nectar plants include: *Asclepias* (the milkweeds), *Aster*, *Coreopsis*, *Echinacea*, *Eupatorium* (Joe Pye weed), *Liatris* (blazing star or gayfeather), *Rudbeckia*, and *Solidago* (the goldenrods).

The order Lepidoptera includes butterflies, moths, and skippers. Some general tips for distinguishing among these three families:

- **Moths** are generally night-flying; have antennae that look like feathers; rest with their wings open, down, and flat; have a hairy, thicker body; and have wings that are dull, mostly brown or gray.
- **Butterflies** are day-flying; have antennae that are smooth and thin with rounded knobs on the ends; rest with wings closed and upward; have a smooth, slender body (although in some cases a bit hairy); and have wing patterns that are generally bright and colorful.
- **Skippers** are day-flying; have antennae that are smooth and thin, but are hooked at the end; rest with wings open, closed, or both, hind wings down, forewings up (yes, they are a tricky bunch!); have a hairy, thicker body; and have wings that are generally more dull.

Other tips for telling who's who:

- Invest in a good book. Janie's favorites are *National Audubon Society Field Guide to Butterflies* (which includes photos of butterflies with their wings close—a great aid in identification), *Stokes Butterfly Book: The Complete Guide to Butterfly Gardening, Identification, and Behavior*, and *The Family Butterfly Book*.
- Have patience. Move slowly. Be observant; note flight patterns, size, wing shape, and wing colors and patterns.
- Use your camera.
- Consider whether you have the right environment for the type of butterfly that you think you are seeing. In this regard, take into account habitat (e.g., garden, meadow, swamp, woodland edge, open forest, dry area, moist area), the available adult food source (nectar, rotting fruit, sap, carrion, manure), and host plants (the food source for caterpillars). For example, if you're in a swamp area, does the field guide indicate that the butterfly you have potentially identified, actually lives in swampy areas?

Next, the butterflies that are most commonly found in Illinois gardens were considered.

The **monarch** is the Illinois state butterfly, and lives in

April Meeting Recap (cont'd)

open areas, meadows, and woodland edges. Its preferred host plants is milkweed (especially swamp and common milkweeds), with butterfly weed as a second choice. It overwinters as an adult, migrating to Mexico each year. Monarchs contain a chemical that them extremely distasteful to other vertebrates. Some butterflies that would otherwise be edible to vertebrates, have adapted to mimic the appearance of the monarch so that they trick the vertebrates into passing them by as a food source.

Both the **painted lady** (*Vanessa cardui*) and **American painted lady** (*Vanessa virginiensis*) are found in Illinois. Some are often misidentified as monarchs. Hosts plants of the painted lady include thistle, composites (asters), and mallow; host plants of the American painted lady include asters and other composite flowers.

The habitat of the **viceroy** is marshes, meadows, and woodland edges. Thus, they are not often seen in the typical home garden. Host plants include willow, aspen, cottonwood, poplar, and some fruit trees. The adults get their food from nectar, sap, and manure. This butterfly mimics the monarch (see above) in order to benefit from the natural aversion of vertebrates to eating monarchs.

The **cabbage white** has a wingspan of only 1.5 inches. It lives in all open areas. Its host plants are in the mustard or cabbage family (Brassica), especially cabbage and broccoli. Adults feed on nectar.

The **sulphur** genus lives in all open areas. Host plants include legumes (alfalfa, clover, false indigo), Senna, vetch, and sneezeweed. Adults feed on nectar.

The **tiger swallowtail** lives in open areas, orchards, and woodland edges. Host plants include: American elm, red maple, black cherry, poplar, sassafras, spicebush, tulip tree, wafer ash, willow, and American hornbeam. Caterpillars are found only in the tree tops, so they are rarely seen by homeowners. Adults feed on nectar.

The **black swallowtail** lives in meadows, open areas, orchards, and woodland edges. Its host plants are in the carrot family: dill, parsley, fennel, and parsnips, as well as the native angelica and zizia.

The **giant swallowtail** lives in open areas and woodland edges. Host plants include prickly ash or hoptree (*Ptelea trifoliata*), and common rue. Adults feed on nectar and manure.

The **spicebush swallowtail** is not as common as the other swallowtails. It lives around woodland edges, meadows, fields, stream edges, and gardens. Host plants include—you guessed it—spicebush and sassafras. Adults feed on nectar.

Similar to the monarch, the **pipevine swallowtail** contains a chemical that makes it distasteful to predators. As a result, there are otherwise edible species that have come to mimic its appearance. The pipevine swallowtail lives around open woodlands, meadows, stream edges, orchards, and gardens. Host plants include pipevines such as Dutchman's pipevine and Virginia snakeroot. Adults feed on nectar.

The **red-spotted purple** is fairly common. It lives around woodland edges and in open areas. Its host plants are willow (including pussy willow), apple, aspen, cherry, hawthorn, hornbeam, and poplar. Adults eat nectar, carrion, fruit, and manure.

There are many different **fritillaries**. They are golden or orange in color and have a wingspan of 2-3 inches. They live in open areas, moist meadows, open woodlands, open forests, and pond edges. Thus, they are not often seen in the typical home garden. Their host plants include those in the violet family, and adults eat nectar and manure.

The **red admiral** lives around woodland edges, and its host plants include nettles, false nettles, and hops. Adults eat sap, fruit (especially rotten fruit in the fall), manure, and nectar.

If you see a butterfly that looks like tree bark when its wings are closed, you may have found a **mourning cloak**. They live around woodland edges and in open areas. Adults eat sap and fruit, but rarely nectar.

The **comma** butterfly is so named because it has a very small white comma-shaped marking on the underside of its rear wings. They live in open forests and around woodland edges. Host plants include hops, nettles, and elm; adults eat sap, carrion, fruit, and manure.

Another butterfly with a punctuation-inspired name, the **question mark** has a whitish comma and dot on the underside of its rear wings. Host plants include hops, nettles, elm, and hackberry.

The **buckeye** has very distinctive coloring, with blue-purple spots on its brown wings. It lives in meadows and among low weeds. Host plants include plantain (the non-native weed), vervain, and wild petunia (*Ruellia*), as well as the non-native sedum and snapdragon.

Pearl crescent butterflies are rather social and not as easily frightened as many other butterflies. It lives in open areas and meadows, and its host plants include asters and swamp milkweed. Adults feed on nectar.

The **spring azure** is a small butterfly that lives in open areas and meadows, and adults eat nectar. Host plants include blueberry, dogwood, viburnum, New Jersey tea, and wild cherry.

(continued on page 6)

How Old Is That Tree? By Constance McCarthy

Unless you've planted a tree yourself or know the person who did plant it, I think it's a common musing to wonder just how old one of your trees might be. It is theoretically possible to hire an arborist to do an incremental boring. However, this potentially injures the tree and can be especially difficult if the tree is very large, has exceptionally hard wood, or is rotten in the middle.

If you are interested in research, you can look for historical accounts, old photos, or accounts of plantings associated with historical structures. For example, a dated photo of a small sapling would help refine an estimate of the tree's age. Or perhaps an older family member recalls the year in which elms were lost to Dutch elm disease, and the subsequent planting with replacement trees. Or trees in your neighborhood may have been planted as part of a documented Arbor Day celebration many years ago. Places to look include "your local library, courthouse, town newspaper, or books available from historical societies or nature centers. Making acquaintance with your neighbors can help, too."

A more mathematical way of estimating the age of a particular tree is to apply a formula from the International Society of Arboriculture which is based on the diameter at breast-height (DBH). "First, measure the tree's circumference at a point 54 inches above ground level. Divide the circumference by 3.14 to get the diameter. Then, multiply the diameter (in inches) by the factor given in the table. As an example, a 22-inch diameter white oak would be approximately 110 years old."

Tree	Factor	Tree	Factor	Tree	Factor
American beech	6	Green ash	4	Shingle oak	6
American elm	4	Horse chestnut	8	Shumard oak	3
American sycamore	4	Kentucky coffee tree	3	Silver maple	3
Black cherry	5	Littleleaf linden	3	Sugar maple	5.5
Black maple	5	Northern red oak	4	Tulip tree	3
Black walnut	4.5	Pin oak	3	White ash	5
Colorado blue spruce	4.5	Red maple	4.5	White oak	5
Douglas fir	5	River birch	3.5	White pine	5
European beech	4	Shagbark hickory	7.5		

"For future generations to know something about the trees you plant, you need to keep some form of record. Perhaps one day dendrochronologists will refer to time period of tree-planting as the Vanguard Wild Ones Era!"

Coming next month: a profile of how two members of our chapter applied this method to a most beautiful bur oak on their property.

Quoted portion reprinted "Arbor Vitals," by Joy Buslaff, from the Wild Ones Journal, Vol. 13, No. 6 published by Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, PO Box 1274, Appleton, WI 54912 www.for-wild.org, (877)394-9453.

April Meeting Recap (cont'd from page 5)

The **Eastern tailed-blue** is small, but has the most amazing, vivid coloring (blue-purple). It lives in open areas and meadows; host plants include vetches, clovers, alfalfa, and other legumes (including beans). Adults eat nectar.

The **grey hairstreak** is also small, and lives in weedy areas, old meadows, and open woods. It has many host plants including corn, oak, strawberry, mint, legumes, and mallow. Adults eat nectar.

The **banded hairstreak** lives in weedy areas, open woods, and woodland edges, and its host plants include walnut, hickory, and oak. Adults eat nectar.

Skippers are a very difficult to identify, even for the experts. They can be found in open areas, meadows, and woodland edges; adults eat nectar. Grasses are among

the host plants for skippers, including prairie dropseed.

A few more things to bear in mind: Most chemicals that kill Japanese beetles are also lethal to caterpillars and butterflies. And before you immediately leap for a chemical upon seeing that something has been eating your tree or plant leaves, take a step back. Most horticulturists might consider treating a tree or plant once 10% of its foliage has been eaten. However, native caterpillars generally don't eat more than 5% of a host plant. This is all part of nature being in balance. The butterflies would never have survived if the caterpillars were to have devoured host plants in their entirety. In order to preserve their food source, they somehow know just how much of a plant to eat—nature's version of "don't bite the hand that feeds you"!

Merchandise Update submitted by Shey Lowman, Merchandise Coordinator



We are very fortunate to have available for you several copies of Mohlenbrock and Ladd's *Distribution of Illinois Vascular Plants*. This 1978 book shows the distribution, by county, of every vascular plant known to occur in Illinois as a native, naturalized, or escaped species. It is the only book showing the location of Illinois native plants outside the Chicago area. Over 3,000 plants are listed. This fabulous book sells for \$28.00, less than the \$29.50 list price. Get yours while they last!



Also available is Steven Apfelbaum's *Nature's Second Chance*. Steven is the founder and president of Applied Ecological Services in Brodhead, WI. Using the principles of Aldo Leopold he restored his Stone Prairie Farm near Juda, WI to a flourishing prairie. This book is as delightful as one of his presentations, both humorous and educational. It is available for \$15.00.



2010 Chapter Programs and Events

Date/Time	Program	Speaker	Location
May 8 1:00 - 4:00 PM	Woodland "Open Yard" Tour For additional information contact	For additional information contact Lenae Weichel at 815-962-2725	Watson Yard 3703 Highcrest Rd. Risley Yard 3007 Vinton Ave.
May 14 & May 15	Pick Up Prairie Plant Orders See order form for full details	Constance McCarthy Prairie Plant Sale Coord.	7208 N. 2nd St Machesney Park, (815) 282-0316
May 20 7:00 PM	Edible Mushrooms of Illinois	Gregory Mueller Coauthor of <i>Edible Mushrooms of Illinois and Surrounding States</i>	Burpee Museum of Natural History
June 17 7:00 PM	Photographing Native Plants	Tim Lewis National Board Director, Wild Ones	Burpee Museum of Natural History
July 15 7:00 PM	Yard Tour/Evening Social Members Only	Home of Lenae Weichel and Kevin Holdmann	1438 Collingswood Dr Rockford, IL 61103
Aug.-Sept.	Native Shrub and Tree Sale Orders taken during this time See brochure for complete details	John Peterson Native Tree & Shrub Sale Coordinator	
August 19 7:00 PM	The Missing Link The Transition from Canopy to Ground: The Ecology, Culture and Use of Shrubs and Small Trees	Professor John Harrington University of WI - Madison	Burpee Museum of Natural History
Sept	Native Tree & Shrub Pickup See brochure for complete detail	John Peterson Native Tree & Shrub Sale Coord.	
Sept. 16 7:00 p.m.	Reptiles & Amphibians	Lisa Johnson	Burpee Museum of Natural History
October 21 7:00 p.m.	To Be Determined		Burpee Museum of Natural History
November 18 7:00 p.m.	Pot Luck and Seed Exchange All Members only welcome with or without seeds Bring a dish to share.		Burpee Museum of Natural History
December	No Meeting-Happy Holidays!		

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 **5/1/2010**, 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 (kublaikhan@mac.com) *Newsletter Editor:* Pambi Camacho 815-332-7637 (dkcamps@aol.com)

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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.