



Rock River Valley Chapter Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 11

November 2010

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

Inside this issue:

Message from the President	2
Board of Directors in Action	2
October Meeting Recap	3-5
2010 Chapter Calendar	5
Chapter Contact Information	6

Pot Luck & Seed Exchange Thursday, November 18, 2010

Location: Burpee Museum of Natural History
737 N. Main St., Rockford IL

Time: 7:00 pm

This has been an exciting year for our chapter. We have seen many programs that have gotten us thinking about why, what and how we can add native plants, trees and shrubs to our landscape to help preserve our world. Many new people have attended our monthly educational programs. Members visited several locations for Show Me/Help Me Days. Wild Ones members presented at several area conferences and meetings and our booth was on display at many activities in the community.

Many plants and shrubs were saved during our plant rescues. Through the efforts of our plant and tree and shrub sale coordinators, several thousand new plants, trees and shrubs were added to the Northern Illinois landscape. Many, many volunteers represented and assisted the chapter at events throughout the area, including at Gardening for Food & Fun, Bird Fest, the Renewable Energy Fair, the various plant sales and our second woodland yard tour as part of the Celebrate Earth series of events.

November is a time to celebrate all we have accomplished. It is a time to visit with and get to know our newer members. Please join us at our *members only* (i.e., members plus partner, significant other, friend, etc.) by coming together to remember our activities and experiences from this year. Although there will be no formal program, there will be an opportunity to exchange native seeds from our yards for those who wish to do so. It is *not* required that you bring seeds in order to take seeds home! Even if you haven't attended any meetings or events this year, you are very warmly invited to join us at this event.

Details for the Pot Luck and Seed Exchange:

You bring: a side dish to share (salad, vegetable, dessert), a place setting, silverware & cup

We bring: hot main dish - meat ravioli and a cheese ravioli, plus hot apple cider

For those who wish to exchange seed here is how it works: Please bring any native seed you have collected on your property and would like to share with other members. Preferably the seed should be of local species. All seeds should be clearly identified with both the botanical and/or common name on the container. If possible, please indicate if the seed was collected from a local plant or a purchased plant. Seeds do not need to be cleaned and ready for planting. For those who need them, small envelopes will be provided to use in transporting your new seeds home.

(continued on page 2)



Articles for the January 2011 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor, at: dkcamps@aol.com by December 23, 2010.

Message from the President Constance McCarthy

Pass It On

By the time you're reading this, you will have noticed the Wild Ones membership brochure that was inserted in your newsletter this month. I hate mentioning the holidays before Halloween is barely behind us, but please consider a gift membership in Wild Ones for a nature-lover in your life.

Or simply pass the brochure along to someone who might be interested in learning more about native plants and supporting the mission of Wild Ones. There's not a lot going on outdoors in January, which makes it a fine time to invite a friend to attend a Wild Ones meeting for the

first time.

Wild Ones isn't the kind of organization to put on a big, slick advertising campaign to gain new members. We rely more on word of mouth, and person-to-person sharing of what Wild Ones is all about. Joining Wild Ones doesn't just help support our chapter and the national organization, but also brings a host of benefits (including newsletter and journal subscriptions, mentor program, library privileges, and invitations to show me/help me events and plant rescues). Even for folks who can't make it to meetings regularly, benefits abound.

Thanks in advance for helping to get the word out!

(continued from page 1)

Remember: Anyone may take seeds, and you do not have to bring seeds to take seeds! Come whether you plan to participate in the seed exchange or not! All members are welcome. Come help us celebrate another successful year of introducing the community to the benefits joys of native landscaping.

This program is for Wild Ones members only.

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

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

Board of Directors in Action Shey Lowman, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Board of Directors, as discussed at the August 12, 2010 meeting, include the following:

- Tim and Janaan Lewis' yard was one of the Prairie Tour stops at the Master Gardeners Upper Midwest Conference on September 16. The conference was attended by 475 Master Gardeners from 4 states; Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.
- The Chapter will soon host their own website, greatly expanding information and services for members.
- Three new books have been purchased for the Lending Library: *Rain Gardens: Managing Water Sustainability in the Garden and Designed Landscape*, *The Family Butterfly Book* and the *National Audubon Society Field Guide to Mushrooms*.
- The Chapter is donating \$3.00 per Chapter member to the Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education fund.
- The Chapter donated and delivered 14 trees and shrubs to the national WILD Center to support their landscaping efforts.

Highlights of activities of the Board of Directors, as discussed at the October 14, 2010 meeting, include the following:

- Tinker Cottage is undertaking a major restoration using native plants on a one acre plot. The site was carefully designed by the Park District and Master Naturalists. The Chapter will be supporting the project through our spring plant sales.
- A motion was passed to use www.WildOnesRRVC.org as the domain name for the Chapter website.
- Lenae Weichel announced that a Show Me/Help me is scheduled for this spring.
- Barbara Flores has volunteered to co-chair the Woodland Plant Sale this spring. Way to go Barbara!
- Kim Risley announced that she is negotiating with Douglas Tallamy to be our presenter next October 20, 2011. Doug is the author of *Bringing Nature Home, How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants*, a wonderful book that is available in our Lending Library and for sale at our Merchandise table.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, December 9, 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.

October Meeting Recap Lenae Weichel

Photos by John Peterson

Should Native Trees and Shrubs be Pruned? Why and How - October Meeting Recap

The meeting began with several timely announcements; two of which are still relevant at press time. Volunteers are needed to help write meeting recaps for future meetings, contact Constance McCarthy for more information or to volunteer. Also, the Nygren Wetland Preserve Juried Art Exhibit will be up in the Mahlburg Auditorium at the Burpee Museum of Natural History through the end of November. If you have not had the chance to view the pieces created in or inspired by Nygren, you will want to see them (perhaps at our November member social/potluck?). Works of art are also for sale (multiple copies of photographic works available).

The educational program was presented by John Richards of Tree Care Enterprises in Rockford who shared with us some basic pruning information, showed examples in photographs, gave a practical example (pruning a shrub to show us how to keep it looking natural), and answered our various and numerous questions. Here are the highlights of his presentation. The principles John shared apply to both trees and shrubs.



October meeting presenter John Richards, president and owner of Tree Care Enterprises

In nature, branch death is normal. It is part of the regularly-occurring shedding process and is especially common on inner or lower limbs that receive less sunlight. John showed a photo of a dead branch that was already being broken down by fungus. There was an abrupt line where the fungus stopped and did not invade the rest of the tree, this is where that branch will eventually fall off, essentially pruning itself, and this also shows an important line of defense for the tree. Although that branch would fall off naturally if left alone, in smaller landscapes or near buildings or walkways it is a good idea to prune dead wood from trees and shrubs for safety and aesthetics. Lee Johnson reminded us (and John wholeheartedly agreed) that in more naturalized landscapes, dead wood and trees should be left to provide food and shelter for insects, birds, and animals. Pruning can also contribute to the vitality of the tree or shrub. When a branch or limb dies, the bark around the base of that branch forms a callus. This callus will continue to build and grow, requiring energy, until the limb falls naturally. A tree's first priority is to shed dead wood and close wounds and its second is to grow leaves, berries, and nuts, etc. By pruning off dead limbs, the tree can put more energy into the elements that we love about our trees and shrubs.

The proper way to cut dead wood is the one that protects the natural defenses of the tree. A clean cut should be made with sharp bypass pruners (not anvil which will leave some bark uncut) at a 45-degree angle, taking care not to cut the branch bark ridge. This ridge extends over and around the branch where it connects to the trunk



Red arrow shows branch bark ridge



Lines show appropriate and inappropriate cut locations

Both photos provided by Tree Care Enterprises.

(continued on page 4)

October Meeting Recap (cont'd)



Kim Risley, John Richards and Ginnie Watson

and goes all the way through to the pith of the tree. It's dense cells prevent disease from going up or down the stem of the tree or shrub. Do not cut through this or any callus that forms after a cut. The callus is important to the protection of the tree around a scar. Earlier methods of pruning, including flush cuts and sealing with tar or other compounds, are now known to be unhealthy for the tree, impacting the branch bark ridge, causing interrupted scarring, and can cause internal rot by sealing in fungus, disease or moisture.

Q&A

When is the best time to prune? Fall and winter (November through February) are best and safest for any tree. There is less chance of disease or fungus entering the wound and a possible reduction in insect problems in the spring (from insects overwintering in dead wood). In summer, it is important to avoid pruning oaks and elms. Diffuse, porous woods including maple and oak should not be pruned in spring due to flowing sap and the potential for oak wilt.

ComEd top cuts my trees every three years, causing panic growth (profuse emergency growth from weak buds caused by trauma to the tree). Should I remove it? Topping is about the worst thing you can do to a tree. When a tree is topped, it will come back with force. Panic growth should be removed, as it is weak and unstable, until a new crown forms.

I have a small Chinquapin Oak with five leaders from the same crotch, how should I prune it and should I straighten it out? Choose one or two dominant leaders

and remove the rest. Do not worry about straightening it as it is a young tree, it will quickly grow past the crook.

Do you have any advice on rubbing branches? You want to eliminate rubbing branches. Normally, the one laying or rubbing on top is the one to take.

What is your opinion on pruning newly-planted trees? Don't. Ninety percent of the root system is left in the ground when a tree is transplanted. That tree needs all its energy stores to rebuild its root system, not to expend energy creating calluses. Remove any dead wood but nothing else and give the tree a year or more before doing any severe thinning or pruning.

How do you feel about mulching trees and shrubs? I love mulch, to a degree, as long as it's decayed and not fresh wood chips. Mulch should be aged three or four months before using. And be careful not to mulch too thickly around the base of the tree. Mulch can be two to three inches deep out around the drip line but should taper back to nothing around the base of the tree. Mulch over an inch deep can give mice and other rodents a place to live out the winter, snacking on the tree bark as the season progresses and girdling your tree by spring thaw.

I have several trees with roots protruding out of the ground, what should I do? Surface roots can be removed, especially if they are being hit by mower blades. In general, trees and grass don't create a healthy combination (especially so with oaks which prefer a lower pH than lawns) so mulch around a tree as far out as you are comfortable. You can add a thin layer of compost/dirt mix and then mulch but too much soil will be equivalent to soil compaction and interfere with nutrient absorption. If you remove surface roots, the tree will likely not miss them (especially with locust or maple). You can cut with an axe (it's not easy to remove them) but then you must go back with a sharp pruner to make a clean cut.

Are there any special considerations for conifers? Multiple leaders are less of a concern here, although you may choose to single out one and remove others. Right now, most conifers are shedding their three-year growth from the inside and you will see brown and dropped needles. This is natural and only a problem if the browning is occurring from the outside or at the tips of branches. There is never a bad time to take dead wood out of a conifer as they need sun or their branches will die back. I also recommend pruning conifers up off the ground (one foot is sufficient) to avoid moisture and disease.

Although there were other questions asked and answered,

these were the most applicable to all. John reminded us that as we are planning our plantings, variety is the key. And it is important to remember that trees and shrubs are long-term plants, the effects of healthy or poor pruning may not show for 20 years or more.

Special Note: A question was asked about a concern with the signature oak tree at Nygren Wetland Preserve

and John shared with us about Tree Care’s “Adopt an Oak” program. They have adopted the 300-year-old oak at the corner of Spring Creek and Alpine Rd. and are rescuing it from the stress of construction and soil compaction (oak roots are no more than 30 inches deep but spread for 100 feet or more!). John has now also committed to adopt the Nygren oak as well.



Membership Update

Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

170 memberships on November 1, 2010

Welcome new member
Judith Barnard

63 attended the October program. A thank you to Don Heneghan for helping to greet members at the October program.

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.

2010 Chapter Programs and Events

Date/Time	Program	Speaker	Location
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!		

2011 Chapter Programs and Events

January 20 7:00 p.m.	Propagating Native Plants From Seed	Tim Lewis Wild Ones National Board President	Burpee Museum of Natural History
February 17 7:00 p.m.	Wild Ones Members Photo Yard Tour A visual tour of Wild Ones members native planting projects	Lisa Johnson - Coord. (815) 965-3433 x 1018	Burpee Museum of Natural History
March 17 7:00 p.m.	Nature’s Second Chance: Restoring the Ecology of Stone Prairie Farm	Steve Apfelbaum Corrine Daniels Taylor Creek Restoration Nurseries	Burpee Museum of Natural History
Mar. -Apr.	Native Plant Sales Orders taken during this time	Kim Risley Woodland plant Coord. Constance McCarthy Plant Sale Coord.	

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.



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 **11/1/2010**, 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 and Chairs

<i>President:</i> Constance McCarthy 815-282-0316 (kublai@mac.com)	<i>Youth Education & Grants Chair:</i> Kim Lowman Vollmer 815-397-6044 (kimlowvol@aol.com)
<i>Vice President:</i> Kim Risley 815-962-4584 (rip-cord01@comcast.net)	
<i>Secretary:</i> Shey Lowman 815-757-4456 (slowman@niu.edu)	<i>Librarian:</i> Ginnie Watson (815) 398.0138 VSWatson47@aol.com
<i>Treasurer:</i> Janet Giesen 815-899-6139 (giesen@niu.edu)	<i>Volunteer Coordinator:</i> Ed Kletecka (815) 389.0120 fiero2@charter.net
<i>Membership Chair:</i> Marilyn Heneghan 815-389-7869 (informationoptions@att.net)	<i>Booth Coordinator, FREC representative:</i> Tim Lewis (815) 874.3468 natives.tim@comcast.net
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i> Pambi Camacho 815-332-7637 (dkcamps@aol.com)	<i>Refreshments Coordinator:</i> Bev Crittenden (815) 964.8252 bevcrit@aol.com
<i>Plant Rescue Chair:</i> John Peterson 815-248-2110 (tacmot@msn.com)	<i>Merchandise Chair:</i> Shey Lowman 815-757-4456 (slowman@niu.edu)
<i>Show Me/Help Me Chair:</i> Lenae Weichel 815-282-5482 (lenae@weichel.org)	

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.wildones.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.