



Rock River Valley Chapter Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue 8

August 2011

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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Underground Ecology or: How I Learned to Love Dirt Thursday, August 18, 2011

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

Time: 7:00 pm

Join us in August for this long-awaited presentation on the ecology beneath our feet! Peyton Smith, PhD student in the Department of Soil Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison will present this fascinating subject pertaining to the research of former faculty member Dr. Teri Balsler.

Balsler's dissertation assessed the importance of microbial community composition for ecosystem functioning and found that "when we disturb the soil or change the environment, soil microbes responsible for processes will be affected and the composition of the microbial community will shift as organisms better suited to the new environmental conditions grow and compete."

We know the characteristics and needs of the trees, shrubs, forbs, and grasses we have planted in our landscapes but do we also know the nature of the soil in which they grow? The composition and character of our soil influence the growth of plants within it. It also affects how plant life responds to global changes. As we strive to include more native plantings in our yards and communities, we are disturbing the soil and changing our community.

Join us to learn the effects these changes can have on the ecology of our own communities and learn to "love the dirt" too.

This program is free and open to the public.
For information regarding this or other programs,
please contact Lenae Weichel at 815-282-5482.

Submitted by Lenae Weichel
Interim Program Chair



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



Message from the President Constance McCarthy

Our chapter to play a role at national Wild Ones meeting

In mid-August, the annual national membership meeting for Wild Ones will take place at the Wild Center, the headquarters of Wild Ones in Appleton, Wisconsin. In addition to Tim Lewis (national president of Wild Ones), our chapter will be represented by me and Ginnie Watson. This is because the weekend will also include a chapter development component.

The aim of the chapter development sessions is to allow chapter representatives to share what is working well for them, and also to learn from the representatives of the other chapters about what is working well for them. I field questions from other chapters (especially those that are smaller or in the earlier stages of existence) throughout the year about many of the topics that will be covered at this national meeting. Still, it will be nice to put faces to the names I have encountered only via email correspondence so far.

Some of you may know that our chapter is one of the biggest Wild Ones chapters in the country, and in our

years of existence (17, to be exact!), we have become quite adept at a good number of things. I think that it is no accident that we have endured and continued to grow for so long.

While I of course expect to learn from other chapters, I am also looking forward to sharing some of the reasons for our success as a chapter. Breakout sessions will cover topics such as how to increase membership; volunteer recruitment and retention; partnering with other organizations to accomplish our mission; publicizing chapter events; and how to organize a successful plant sale. I'll be moderating the sessions on volunteers and partnering, and I'm sure that Ginnie and I will return with more ideas on how we can keep our chapter on its upward trajectory.

Watch for a report on our attendance at the meeting in a future issue of this newsletter!



Membership Update Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

158 memberships on August 1, 2011

Welcome new members
Larry Swacina

**Special Thanks to Recent
Rock River Valley Chapter Donators**
(any amount about the \$30 basic dues)
Marlowe and Nancy Holstrum
John & Caroil Gerrond

36 attended the yard tour.

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.

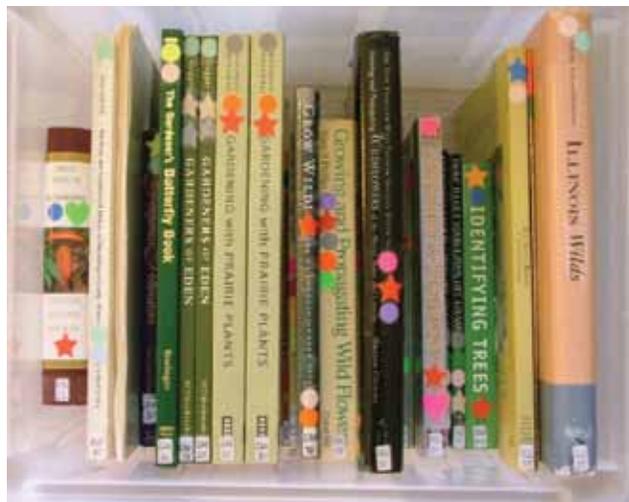
Dues payments can be sent either directly to the National Office or to the Chapter Membership Chair, Marilyn Heneghan. Forty percent of the dues paid, regardless of the amount, are shared with Rock River Valley Chapter. Members wishing to make donations specifically for the local chapter, should make 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.

Using The Library Just Got Easier! Ginnie Watson, Librarian

Checking a book out of our chapter library is easy; choosing the right book has, in the past, sometimes been a challenge. There has never been enough time to browse and, with the books arranged alphabetically by title, finding a book on a particular subject was a matter of going through all the books to find the one which discussed your subject of interest

Now, thanks to a team of 5 hard-working committee members, our library is so much more user-friendly. Each member of the team took a box, each containing 15-25 books, and went through each book to discover the main subject(s) discussed therein.

A list of all subjects used to describe the books was made and a sticker symbol was chosen to represent each subject. The sticker(s) representing the subject(s) of the book was placed on the binder of each book.



Now, when you come to the library looking for a book on, say, 'prairies,' simply look for all books with a hot orange circle on the binder. Looking for books on 'restoration'? Find books with a green star on the binder. 'Rain gardens'...blue heart! A poster will be hung on the wall listing all subjects used along with their representative symbols.

Using the library just got easier! Come early to discover just how easy it is to find the book(s) covering the subject about which you have been pondering.

Next time you see Barbara Flores, Karen Matz, Cathy Johnson, Lynda Johnson, or Marcia De Clerk let them know how much you appreciate all their hard work. They spent weeks making it easier for you to be a well read Wild One!

Board of Directors in Action Shey Lowman, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Board of Directors, as discussed at the June 9, 2011 meeting, include the following:

- The new Wild Ones event signs were very successful at both plants sales.
- Constance and Ginnie Watson will be attending the National Wild Ones Annual Membership Meeting in Neenah, WI at the WILD Center, August 20-21. They will be representing our chapter and exchanging information and ideas with other chapters from across the country.
- The following book has been added to the Lending Library, be sure to check it out: *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* by Richard Louv
- To support the Doug Tallamy presentation on October 20, chapter members spent many volunteer hours working in the native plant gardens of the Burpee Museum in exchange for a reduced facility fee. Also Four River Environmental Coalition donated \$500 toward expenses for the Tallamy presentation. Thanks to all!

The next board meeting will be Thursday, August 11, 2011, 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.

July Social Recap Cathy Schafman



Don & Marilyn Heneghan

On Thursday evening, July 21, a group of our members had the pleasure of visiting the yard of Don and Marilyn Heneghan. We went up the winding, wooded driveway on northeastern Winnebago County property, and came to an opening with a beautiful home and lovely view of prairie plants. After a sweltering day, the evening cooled and it was pleasant weather to see the wooded and prairie native areas that the Heneghans had planted in lieu of the traditional yard that existed when they purchased the property. Don began by saying there are 5 very old Oak Trees on his property. A magnificent one was visible as our tour began at the largest prairie area. When a loss of trees, due to Oak wilt, left him with a sunny space, he knew he should start with a manageable size prairie garden. Now when he wants to make it larger, he covers a 3 foot perimeter with black plastic, or carpet, in the autumn. Usually by spring, the area is clear of vegetation ready for planting. Deer damage is one of the Heneghan's challenges. They use fences to protect plants from the deer. Don stated that when he has a larger quantity of plants, there should be enough for him and the deer.



Don Heneghan and members at the July Social



Members admire the Heneghan chestnut tree

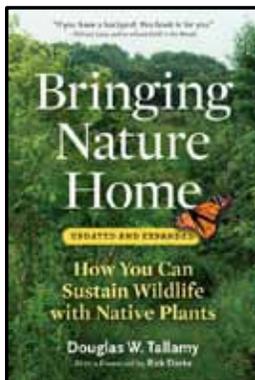
We walked on paths surrounded by native trees, shrubs and plants. Don continually tries to cull the honeysuckle and buckthorn. He pointed out a variety of species including Cardinal Flower, Pagoda Dogwood, and Witch Hazel. Don had a sample garden, close to the back of his house, that was shaded by a Burr Oak and a Shagbark Hickory. He plants samples from plant rescues and special species that he wants to protect, such a Green Dragon. As the tour continued, Don pointed out an American Chestnut Tree that he grew from seed. The Baneberries with their bright red berries caught our eyes along another woodland path. Don has a great diversity of plants and trees that we enjoyed along our tour. We all could appreciate how much time and labor would have been involved to make such a transformation on 3 1/2 acres. Upon finishing our tour, we all sat outside and enjoyed a potluck meal, good conversation and a beautiful yard.

Merchandise Update

Submitted by Shey Lowman
Merchandise Coordinator

New! Do Not Mow Signs

Let your neighborhood know the value of your "natural" ditches. 6" x 9", heavy aluminum, holes on the top and bottom for mounting to a fencepost with screws or wire. **\$15.00**



Mark your calendars! On **October 20**, Douglas Tallamy, the renown author of **Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants**, will be right here at the Burpee Museum of Natural History!

This excellent book is a must read for all Wild Ones. Prairie Moon Nursery says, "Buy, borrow, or steal this book! It is essential reading with ideas that need to become part of our understanding of how life works on this planet." In addition this book is a good read. Have yours ready to be signed! **\$18.00**

This Month Only! Buy any book and received **FREE**, a Wild Ones decal. With a white background, this decal has an adhesive back that will attach to anything. A **\$2.00 value**.



Free! Free! Free!

2011 Chapter Programs and Events

August through September 3

Native Shrub and Tree Sale
Orders taken during this time
See brochure for complete details

John Peterson
Native Tree & Shrub Sale Coordinator
(815) 248-2110
tacmot@msn.com

August 18
7:00 pm

Underground Ecology or How I learned to Love Dirt!

Peyton Smith, PhD
Student at University of Wisconsin-Madison

Burpee Museum of Natural History

September 9 & 10

Native Tree & Shrub Pickup
See brochure for complete details

John Peterson
Native Tree & Shrub Sale Coord.
14037 Baker Rd
Durand, IL 61024
(815) 248-2110

September 15
7:00 pm

Ecology 101

Jack Pizzo
Pizzo & Associates

Burpee Museum of Natural History

October 20
7:00 pm

Bringing Nature Home; How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens

Doug Tallamy
Author, professor University of Delaware

Burpee Museum of Natural History

November 17
7:00 pm

Pot Luck and Seed Exchange
Members only – all members 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 Lenae Weichel at 815-282-5482 for more information.

Look for our Wild Ones booth at these activities

August 13 & August 14 **Illinois Renewable Energy and Sustainable Lifestyle Fair**

Ogle County Fairgrounds
1440 N Limekiln Rd.
Oregon, IL 61061



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 **8/1/2011**, 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

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

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.