



Rock River Valley Chapter Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue 11

November 2011

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

Inside this issue:

Message from the President	2
Gift Memberships	3
October Meeting Recap	4-5
Learning about Woodland Plants	6
2011-12 Chapter Calendar	7
Chapter Contact Information	8

Pot Luck & Seed Exchange Thursday, November 17, 2011

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 provide: hot main dish – pasta dish—both with meat and meatless— 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 3)



Articles for the January 2012 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor, at: dkcamps@aol.com by December 23, 2011.

Message from the President Constance McCarthy

Looking ahead to 2012

Even though it wasn't at the very end of 2011, I'd say that our chapter's Doug Tallamy program puts a nice exclamation point on the year. Many people, within and outside the chapter, came together to make this event such a success, and for that I am grateful. For me, one of the high points was seeing so many guests (nonmembers of our chapter), some of whom travelled a good distance just to come hear the program. I hope that our guests liked what they heard, and that we'll see them again in 2012.

This is also the time of year when chapter members will receive the ballot and annual survey. Even if you haven't attended many (or any) meetings, please take a few minutes to fill out and return the survey. The results are very valuable to our board members and event coordinators.

Speaking of the ballot, there were several slots to fill for 2012. Lenae Weichel, who will become president of the Severson Dells board in 2012, is stepping down as Show Me/Help Me chair. Lenae has given many years of service to the chapter, first as newsletter editor, then as Show Me/Help Me chair, and also as the interim Program Chair this past year. Lu Clifton will run for Show Me/Help Me chair for 2012.

Barb Kuminowski has been appointed to take over as coordinator of the mentor program. This has been on my plate, and I have not been doing it justice.

Last year the board decided to split the position of Vice President and Program Chair into two separate elected board positions. Kim Risley, who used to be V.P./Program Chair continued as V.P. in 2011, in order to help with the transition to a new Program Chair. While Terry Mohaupt will be our Program Chair for 2012, the V.P. slot remains open at the time I am writing this column.

After much reflection, I have decided to run for one more year as chapter President. This July I will become President of the board at Angelic Organics Learning Center, and will just have a very busy second half of the year, heading up two organizations. My ability to sustain that workload is limited, however, and thus this will be my last year as chapter President. I am planning to break off some of my current tasks and move them to the V.P.'s job description.

Over time, I have taken on a little task here and a little task there, and pretty soon the pile of tasks became not insignificant. I hope that this process will make it a bit easier to find a V.P., with a view towards that person running for chapter president for 2013. Stay tuned for updates...



Membership Update Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

158 memberships on November 1, 2011

Welcome New Members

Barbara Kober
Barry Dahlberg
Nita Le Crone
Audrey Johnson
Joe Hemlock

Special Thanks to Recent Rock River Valley Chapter Donators

(any amount about the \$30 basic dues)
Michael & Jean Maloney
Carlos Contreras

141 attended the September program. Thank you to the greeters Barbara Kuminowski, Janet Giesen, Don Heneghan and Lisa Johnson. Everyone did a great job.

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.

Give The Gift of Nature this Holiday Season – A Wild Ones Membership

Submitted by Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

A membership to Wild Ones is a gift of learning about native plants. It is the ideal gift for a friend or relative who is interested in the environment, birds, butterflies and insects or a gift for the neighbor who is always curious about the plants in your yard.

A membership includes:

- The Wild Ones National Journal
- The Rock River Valley Chapter Newsletter
- The use of our Library
- Mentor program
- Show Me/Help Me yard visits
- Plant rescues
- Annual yard tour
- Annual Seed Exchange

To give a gift membership...

Send a check for \$30.00 made out to Wild Ones

Include the name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number and email address of your gift recipient and include your name.

Mail the check and information to –

Marilyn Heneghan
Membership Chair
PO Box 114
Roscoe, IL 61073

A prairie plant note card will be sent to the recipient to announce your gift membership to Wild Ones.

If you have any questions e-mail me at informationoptions@att.net or call me at 815-389-7869.

A gift of Wild Ones is more than a membership to an organization. It opens a world of nature in our own back yards.



Pot Luck & Seed Exchange (cont'd 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.

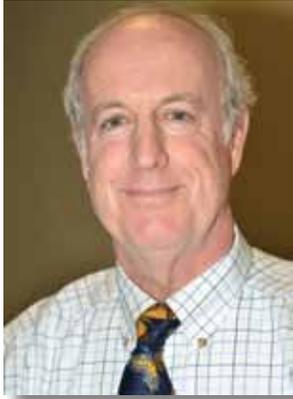
For more information, please contact Terry Mohaupt at 815-399-8432 or e-mail mohaupt@comcast.net.

Submitted by}
Terry Mohaupt
Program Coordinator.

October Meeting Recap *Cathy Schafman*

photos by Tim Lewis

Bringing Nature Home



Dr. Doug Tallamy

A good crowd attended the joint sponsored presentation given by Dr. Doug Tallamy. He began by giving us reasons that our bird populations are down: Many migrating birds die by hitting windows, by getting hit by vehicles, and by starving because of our sterile environment. Our general human population today thought they could develop as much land as wanted without affecting nature. Many humans also have a feeling

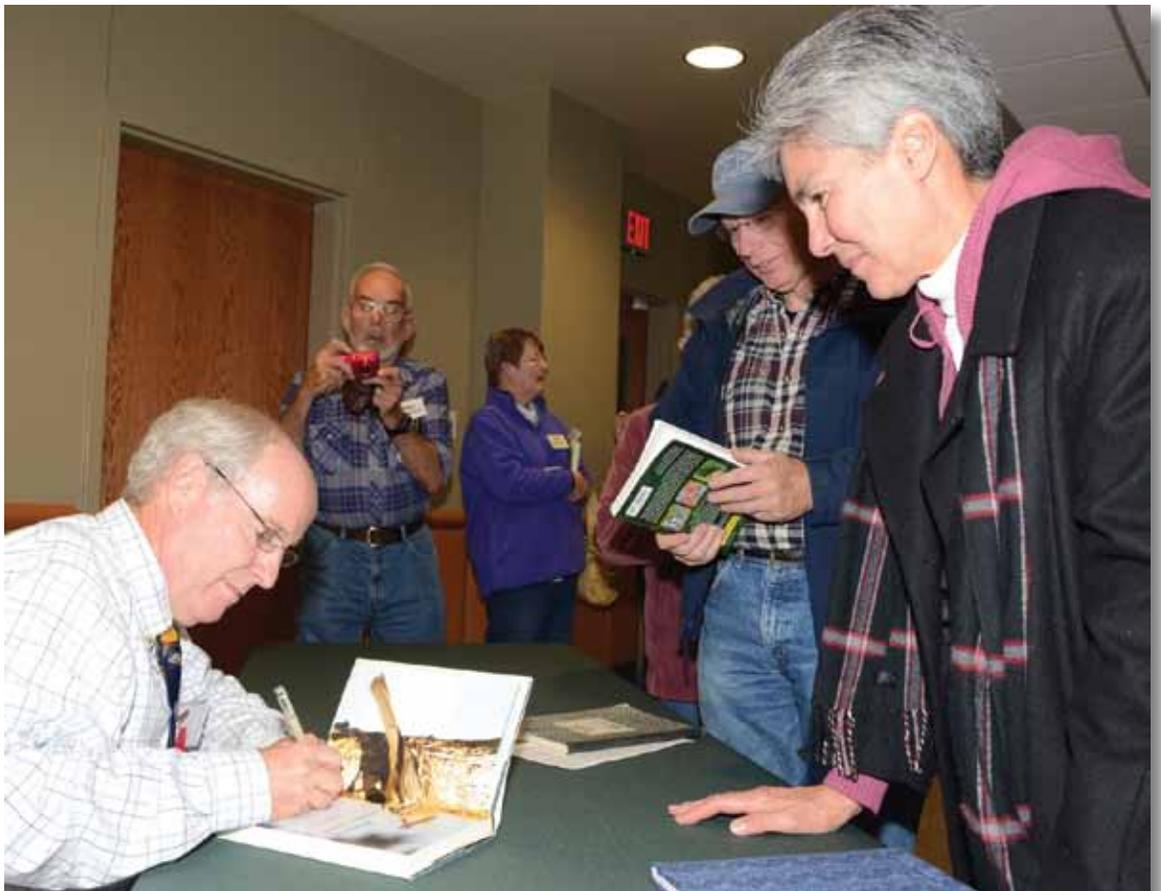
that they don't need other species. They are wrong. Each specie has a role in our ecosystem. We need biodiversity. A healthy ecosystem has redundancy, several species that fill the same need. Nature runs the ecosystem that supports us. Plants and animals are the rivets that hold our lives together. We have taken away 1/2 of the forests on Earth. In the next 50 years, 75 million more acres of forest land will disappear. Forests are a buffer in our weather system. 80% of plants are pollinated by animals.

Another important point that Dr. Tallamy made was nature's impact on children. He feels that many of today's children have "nature deficit disorder". Children need to live in an environment rich with plant and animal life. They are the future stewards of our ecosystem and they need to develop a

relationship and appreciation of it to value and protect it in the future.

More plants in a given area lead to more animals being present. Plants make food for animals. The number of animals that can live in a space, without degrading it, is called the carrying capacity. What have we done to the carrying capacity of the United States? We have 4 million miles of roads and 62,500 square miles of suburban lawns. We have a human dominated system. 54% of the land is covered by cities and suburbs. Imbedded in this land are habitat patches. Functioning ecosystems support our cities by providing food and oxygen. We have converted the natural world into cities and suburbs. We are not suggesting that humans should disappear, but that they should share the earth. We have 4,252 imperiled plant and animal species. Biodiversity is an essential nonrenewable natural resource.

Why aren't parks enough to do the job? Small spaces support small populations of animals. Small populations are more vulnerable to extinction. Our natural areas are not large enough to sustain nature. Our yards support little biodiversity. If we raise the carrying capacity in our yards, we can have a viable ecosystem. We need to



*Tallamy and
Sherrie Snyder,
President of
Illinois Prairie
chapter.*

October Meeting Recap (continued)



Members and Guests listen to Dr. Tallamy

add plants to support the food web. Non native plants support far fewer caterpillars than native plants. Why can't insects eat alien plants? 90% of insects have specialized in a certain plant over time - such as the Monarch Butterfly larvae eating milkweed. If we take those plants away, they have no food and we have fewer caterpillars which leads to fewer birds. If birds have a choice, they will always eat insects over seed as it is more nutritious. We take the insects away, and the food web collapses. 96% of birds eat insects.

A suburban yard has 10% as many trees as a forest. Our yards provide us with a real opportunity to create an ecosystem. We need to reduce the amount of lawn. We need more trees. We need to plant trees, shrubs, grasses, and forbs that are native to our area. If the homeowner starts asking for these plants, the nursery industry will answer. 85% of our alien plants were brought here for gardens and have escaped and become very invasive. They have not only replaced our natives, but they have brought disease and destructive insects. Dr. Tallamy also suggested to plant the most productive species, as far as supporting insects. Even native plants are not equal. An

oak tree can support 534 different species, where as a tulip tree supports 21. You can view website www.bringingnaturehome.net to see a chart of native plants and the number of insect species they support. He said we need to create corridors of productive ecosystem connecting the natural areas we have. To begin, pick the areas of your yard in which you would like to walk. These areas will have traditional lawn. The rest of the area should be heavily planted. If we would plant 1/2 of our yard with natives, this would add up to 20 million acres - which is more land than many of our national parks put together. Have all levels of planting in your yard, and make sure and leave your leaf litter. It provides home for many insects. If you plant more natives, the insects and birds will come in a relatively short time. You can have a balanced community. This is one of the major problems of today that you can actually have grassroots effect in solving.

There is no better place for you and your children to explore nature than in your backyard. Gardening is a way of showing you believe in tomorrow.

Learning About Woodland Plants

Barbara Flores, Woodland Plant Sale Coordinator

Its arrival is inevitable – winter that is. And already I'm impatient to see the first woodland plants appear in my yard. The earliest will be *Hepatica acutiloba* or sharp leaved hepatica. I'll start looking for it in March, snow or no snow. But now that the rush of spring and summer activities is past, I wonder if I'm following best cultural practices for that plant. How can I help it spread in my garden – does it spread by rhizomes or seed or both? And why the genus name "hepatica"? It sounds like it has something to do with the liver. Is that possible? There is a great satisfaction in learning more about these woodland plants we love and winter is the ideal time to do that.

Others of equal charm will follow the hepatica and there is much to learn about all of them. Some are ephemeral and will flower and go dormant in a matter of weeks while others may hold up through a milder summer or go dormant during an especially hot, dry one. Still others will stay the course through the summer and present a show of berries or beautiful foliage in late summer and fall before succumbing to our Illinois winter cold.

What exactly is a woodland plant? The term includes forbs, or flowering plants, ferns and grasses and sedges which are adapted to living in deciduous woods where spring sunlight can stream through the canopy before trees leaf out. Trees and shrubs are woodland plants, of course, but the term normally refers to only herbaceous perennials and not woody ones. While each species has its own requirements, there is a species adapted to nearly every range of soil moisture, soil type and shade conditions. While one thinks of woodsy settings as moist and cool, some woodland plants can tolerate dry soils while others are well adapted to mesic, or medium, levels of moisture.

In general, timing is everything for plants and especially so for woodland ephemeral ones which have a two to three month period to emerge, grow, flower and produce seed. Ephemerals such as Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) really have to hustle. Each plant has to produce enough food to support that beautiful display of flowers and then maintain itself in dormancy for nearly nine months.

For winter reading, three excellent web sites are listed below which provide a wealth of information about individual species and include colorful photographs that bring out the "want" in any gardener. Also, Wild Ones members are urged to check out the great books in our chapter library which is available at each meeting. For those who aren't members, checking out books is one of the many benefits of membership.

In addition to learning best cultural practices, there are so many interesting facts to learn about woodland plants – which ones Native Americans used for their medicinal qualities; which ones are edible; the origin of both common and botanical names; history of the discovery and use by Europeans; value to wildlife and more. Some of this information about selected plants will be included in coming issues of the newsletter.

Websites

The Gallery of Illinois Plants includes approximately 600 species, with photos and information on distribution and habitat: www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cwe/illinois_plants/

The Illinois Wildflowers website contains descriptions of many native (and non-native) Illinois plants: www.illinoiswildflowers.info/index.htm

The University of Wisconsin website is an excellent resource for photos and information: www.wisplants.uwsp.edu/VascularPlants.html



2011 Chapter Programs and Events

November 17 **Pot Luck and Seed Exchange**
7:00 pm
Members only – all members welcome
with or without seeds
Bring a dish to share.

Burpee Museum of
Natural History

December **No Meeting-Happy Holidays!**

2012 Chapter Programs and Events

January 19
7:00 p.m.

Native Ferns

Emily Sessa
University of
Wisconsin-Madison

Burpee Museum of
Natural History

February 16
7:00 p.m.

Controlling Invasive Plant

Nate Hill, Greg Kielback,
and a representative from
Jack Pizzo & Assoc.

Burpee Museum of
Natural History

March 15
7:00 p.m.

**Native Forbs and Grasses
to Attract Birds**

Lee Johnson
Sand Bluff Bird Observatory

Burpee Museum of
Natural History

April 19

TBA

May 17
7:00 p.m.

Native Insects in Our Landscapes

Phil Nixon
University of Illinois
Extension-Urbana

Nicholas Conservatory

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.
Please contact Terry Mohaupt, at 815-399-8432 or mohaupt@comcast.com for more information.



Hosts of July 2011 Yard Tour & Evening Social – Don and Marilyn Heneghan's prairie in their yard



NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

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 **11/1/2011**, 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 (kublaihan@mac.com) *Show Me/Help Me Chair:* Lenae Weichel 815-282-5482 (lenae@weichel.org)
Vice President: Kim Riskey 815-962-4584 (rip-cordo1@comcast.net) *Youth Education & Grants Chair:* Kim Lowman Vollmer 815-397-6044 (kimlowvol@aol.com)
Program Chair: Terry Mohaupt 815-399.8432 (mohaupt@comcast.net) *Volunteer Coordinator:* Guy Smith (815) 633-5293 guysmith99@hotmail.com
Secretary: Shey Lowman 815-757-4456 (slowman@niu.edu) *Booth Coordinator, FREC representative:* Tim Lewis (815) 874.3468 natives.tim@comcast.net
Treasurer: Janet Giesen 815-899-6139 (janetgiesen@gmail.com) *Refreshments Coordinator:* Bev Crittenden (815) 964.8252 bevcrit@aol.com
Membership Chair: Marilyn Heneghan 815-389-7869 (informationoptions@att.net) *Merchandise Chair:* Shey Lowman 815-757-4456 (slowman@niu.edu)
Newsletter Editor: Pambi Camacho 815-332-7637 (dkcamps@aol.com)
Plant Rescue Chair: John Peterson 815-248-2110 (tacmot@msn.com)
Librarian: Ginnie Watson (815) 398-0138 VSWatson47@aol.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 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.