

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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Scan with your Smartphone for more information about Rock River Valley Wild Ones



Articles for the May 2013 newsletter, must be submitted to the Newsletter Chair, at: Pambi@wildonesrrvc.org April 23, 2013.

*Grow A Birdfeeder:
Saving Birds Through Habitat
Thursday, April 18, 2013*

Location: Burpee Museum of Natural History

737 N. Main St., Rockford IL

Time: 7:00 pm



Eastern Kingbird on alternate leaved dogwood (photo by Doug Tallamy).

Every spring a host of birds travel up from the tropics to breeding grounds in North America. Many pass through north-central Illinois before continuing as far as the Arctic tundra. They have to have safe places to rest and feed along the way. Few people are aware that virtually all of these birds have been losing ground for decades. Populations of some species have declined by as much as 90% over the past forty years.

In 1992, Kay and Jim Charter purchased 47 acres of mixed habitat near the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, north of Traverse City, Michigan. In 2001, Kay Charter was the driving force behind the founding of "Saving Birds Through Habitat." This organization is dedicated to teaching people about the challenges facing migrating birds, and instructing them how to help resolve these problems.

We all would like to see Baltimore Orioles, Scarlet Tanagers, Indigo buntings, and varieties of warblers in our yards! The focus of Wild Ones is to encourage folks to landscape with native species – Kay Charter will show us how we can especially attract migrating birds, and nesting birds, too! It's easy to get discouraged when we are overwhelmed by worldwide environmental problems, but this is one way that each one of us can truly make a difference in saving birds.

Kay Charter is the author of "For the Love of Birds." She has received numerous conservation awards. Please join us April 18 for this engaging program. Come early, 6:30 pm, and browse our library, merchandise and information tables, and get a headstart on refreshments!

For more information please call 815-627-0344

Submitted by Lynda and Lee , Co-Program Chairs

Message from the Co-President Bob Arevalo



Bob Arevalo

photo by Jon McGinty

I, along with several other Wild Ones members, attended the recent Gardening for Food and Fun conference. There were several interesting presentations, but I was particularly impressed with Dr. Greg Mueller's keynote address. He touched on a topic about children's relationship with nature that I am passionate about: namely Nature Deficit Disorder (NDD) and the movement called No Child Left Inside.

As we go about planting and tending to our native gardens, I would encourage you to include young people in that process. They could be your children, your grandchildren, children of friends, etc. Children need to get out, be introduced to, and appreciate the wonders of nature. If started young enough, they will enjoy a life long relationship with the plants and creatures in our natural environment. It is magical to see children's eyes light up when they discover something fascinating.

I volunteer at Severson Dells Nature Center to help with the school children who attend nature programs there. I observe a spectrum of knowledge about plants and animals among the various children. Some know a lot and others seem to know very little. Children need mentors: parents, teachers, and friends to go out with them and show and explain the flora and fauna. When



Photo by Kim Lowman Vollmer

this exposure is done well, children will develop a life long interest or even passion for nature.

Wild Ones' mission of preserving biodiversity is truly significant for us and also for our youth. Turn off the television and get those kids outdoors! Teach them what you know about plants and the creatures that live there. Remember, we don't want any child left inside.

Membership Update Marilyn Heneghan, Membership Chair

171 memberships on April 1, 2013

Welcome New Members

Kevin Rohling

**Special Thanks to Recent
Rock River Valley Chapter Donators**

(any amount above the \$37 basic dues)

Karen Matz

Ed & Charlotte Kletecka

55 attended the March program.

Thank you to Lisa Johnson and Ron Cress 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.

Plant Sales Ongoing Shey Lowman, Secretary

A Message for Members about Plant Sales

Both the woodland sale and the prairie sale are ongoing now and deadlines for both are approaching. All members should have received a copy of both the woodland and prairie brochures with recent newsletters. This little message is to remind members that each native plant purchased through the chapter's sales provides a little more food for insects who, in turn, become protein rich food for birds. And many birds benefit directly: the amazing hummingbird finds early food in Wild Columbine and other native flowers throughout the season while many species of birds will dine on the seeds of woodland and prairie grasses and sedges. Native shrubs which will be available in the late summer sale offer cover for birds as well as nesting sites.

In addition, each purchase of native plants through these sales will help to fund the many educational and worthwhile activities of our chapter. Some of us have sun, some have shade and some have both so there is sure to be a great selection of plants in one of these sales that will fit in every member's yard. But most importantly, each additional native plant in the home landscape provides the nectar, pollen, vegetative food and shelter on which so many creatures depend.

Thanks for keeping this message in mind. And remember that if pickup times and places don't work for you, other arrangements can easily be made.

Barbara Flores, woodland sale coordinator – 815-289-8602, Barbara@wildonesrrvc.org

Lenae Weichel, prairie sale coordinator – 815-282-5482, Lenae@wildonesrrvc.org

NEW TO NATIVES? Let our mentors help. One of the benefit of being a Wild Ones member is our mentoring program. We will match you up with a more experienced member to help you plan your native garden, all you have to do is ask! It's a great time to begin thinking about the gardening season.

Call or email me to begin the process.

Barb Kuminowski
Mentor Coordinator
815-248-9263
Barb@wildonesrvc.org



Board of Directors in Action Shey Lowman, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Board of Directors, as discussed at the **February 14, 2013** meeting, include the following:

- 13 Board members attended a Board Retreat on January 20 to discuss Chapter goals and promotional opportunities. It was decided to get a permanent mailing address for the Chapter: 5411 E. State Street PMB340, Rockford, IL 61108
- The Chapter received two thank you letters from Severson Dells and NLI for our donations.
- The Chapter booth was displayed at Gardener's Pathway at Kishwaukee College and at Gardening for Food and Fun at NIU-Rockford.
- New Chapter membership brochures have been designed and printed in full color to promote membership. They are specific to our Chapter and attractive.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, April 11, 2013, at Aunt Mary's, 4431 E. 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.

March 2013 Meeting Recap

Rooftop Gardens



Kevin Carroll got stuck in traffic on the Northwest Tollway coming from Chicago, but his presentation about the evolution of the rooftop garden on City Hall in downtown Chicago was worth the wait. Carroll is the manager of the trees, shrubs and flower beds in more than 70 miles of landscaped medians, 420 traffic circles and cul-de-sacs, 54 malls and

plazas and other landscaped areas along Chicago's streets and expressways for the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), and he oversees the maintenance of the City Hall Rooftop Garden.

He explained that the City Hall rooftop garden started as a "Green Roof" in the year 2000, but in 2003 it was turned over to CDOT to be intensively managed as a garden. Green roofs are designed to be low maintenance, and for the plants to go dormant during dry periods. Mayor Daley wanted more color in the garden and for it to be a showplace for visitors, and asked CDOT to manage it that way. The garden is not open to the public but can be seen from surrounding buildings and by appointment. Visitors from all over the world have come to see the rooftop garden.

Green roofs and rooftop gardens have many benefits over conventional roofs:

- Cool the roof and reduce the Urban Heat Island Effect of big cities
- Reduce rainwater runoff by 75% for a one-inch rain
- Reduce the need for energy for cooling and heating the building
- Reduce air pollution because of the need for less energy
- Extend the life of the roof by 1.5 to 3 times

The City Hall Rooftop Garden is maintained like a garden, and is watered during periods of prolonged drought. It is 12 stories up, on what was to be the 13th story, so the building was designed to hold the extra weight of the soil. Mayor Daley saw green roofs in Hamburg Germany during a visit in 1998. City Hall needed a new roof, so he got money from a settlement

Jerry Paulson

photos by Tim Lewis

with ComEd to build the first rooftop garden on a public building in America. The total cost was \$1.5 million to build beds, haul up planting media and put 500,000 plants in the beds on 22,000 square feet of the 38,000 sq. ft. roof.

Carroll described how the planting beds were constructed, starting with a waterproof membrane, root barrier, drainage mat, reinforcing mesh, filter fabric, drainage media, more filter fabric, planting media and erosion control mesh. The planting media is not organic soil, which is too heavy and has too much organic matter, but expanded clay that holds water, and is light weight.

When Carroll took over management of the garden it had 120 species of native prairie plants, sedges, sedums and thyme growing in it, along with many weeds. They put in an irrigation system, killed the weeds, and reseeded bare areas with flowering annuals, like California poppies, candy tuft, and bachelor button to get quick color, and then started putting in native prairie plants. The sedums, sedges and grasses were the dominant plants at first, but native species soon started to spread into bare spots. The maintenance crew pulled out grass seedlings and thinned out the sedums and thyme to make more room for flowering plants. By 2010 there were 220 species of plants in the garden and more diversity of species that attracted many insects and birds.

The annual maintenance schedule starts in mid-April when the dead stalks and grasses are cut back and removed. The dead plants are left in place over the winter for food and cover for birds. Weeds are selectively sprayed with a herbicide or pulled by hand and left on the ground for mulch. No fertilizer is used on the plants. Some of the problem weeds are black medick, yellow nut sedge, sweet clover and spotted spurge.

During the years that Carroll has overseen the management of the rooftop garden he has determined what species have the best characteristics for growing in this harsh environment. 1) They are adapted for growing in shallow soils, although some deep-rooted prairie plants do just fine; 2) They are long-lived perennials; 3) They reseed themselves; 4) They provide their own source of nitrogen, like legumes, or can live in nitrogen-poor soils, and 5) They can steal nitrogen from nearby plants.

There are many species of prairie plants, especially the legumes, that do well. Some plants with the right characteristics to thrive in a rooftop garden are:

Blue wild indigo, *Baptisia australis*

Butterflyweed, *Asclepias tuberosa*

Prairie dock, *Silphium terebinthinaceum*
 Hairy beard tongue, *Penstemon hirsutus*
 Foxglove beard tough, *Penstemon digitalis*
 Partridge pea, *Cassia fasciculata*
 Big bluestem, *Andropogon gerardii*
 Lead plant, *Amorpha canescens*
 Hoary vervain, *Verbena stricta*
 Illinois sensitive plant, *Desmanthus illinoensis*
 Purple prairie clover, *Petalostemum purpureum*
 Showy tick trefoil, *Desmodium canadense*



Mary Anne Mathwich and Anita Johnson

Other plants that are commonly used in green roofs but did not do well in the City Hall rooftop garden are Ox-eye daisy, Ice plant, Canada anemone, Large-flowered penstemon, and Poppy mallow. Fall asters, goldenrod and grasses, like prairie dropseed, little bluestem, Indian grass, side-oats grama, and switch grass provide color in the fall along with the sedums. Rose hips and crabapples provide winter color and attract birds. More than 100 species of birds have been seen on the roof during spring

and fall migration and over the winter. A beekeeper maintains several bee hives on the roof to help with pollination of the flowers and to produce honey.

Carroll said that the diversity of plants and insects make visits to the rooftop garden the favorite part of his job. He invited Wild Ones members to visit the roof top garden to see this green oasis in the middle of Chicago's Loop

Library to the Rescue Ginnie Watson

Spring! It had to be dragged out from under the doldrums of winter but it is here at last. This is the season...for planning and planting. It is also the season of questions such as 'what are the conditions under which this plant will best grow?' 'What other plants do well under those conditions?' 'How do I lay out a rain garden?' Or even 'how do I begin'? Each of us has questions unique to our situation and they can seem overwhelming. The Library has the answers and then some. You will find plant facts that will help you give your natives the best chance to thrive and grow. You will discover ideas and inspiration that will spark your imagination.

Let me make a few suggestions:

Design your Natural Midwest Garden by Patricia Hill

Attracting Native Pollinators by The Xerces Society

Gardening with Prairie Plants by Sally Wasowski

Illinois Wildflowers by Don Kurz

Urban and Suburban Meadows by Catherine Zimmerman

The Midwestern Native Garden (native alternatives to non native flowers and plants) by Charlotte Adelman

Natural Landscaping by John Diekelmann

The Sunflower Family in the Upper Midwest by Thomas M. Antonio (a very large book!)

The Blue Thumb Guide to Raingardens by Rusty Schmidt

Bringing Nature Home by Doug Tallamy

Birdscaping in the Midwest by Mariette Nowak

Creating Habitats and Homes for Illinois Wildlife by Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources

There are over 170 volumes in our library...the answers are in there...go!

Meet the Board



Janet Giesen, Treasurer

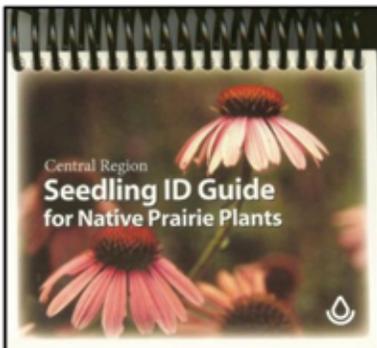
I've been a member of Wild Ones for almost nine years and the RRV Chapter's treasurer for over three years. Being a member of Wild Ones has been a perfect fit for me. I've always loved the out-of-doors: growing up on a small farm, camping, fishing, bird watching, and gardening. But it is because of Wild Ones that I've learned why I should incorporate native plants in my home landscape—now I am a convert! Our chapter's monthly meetings continue to teach me about the importance of native plants and it's great to meet and talk with so many members and guests who share my love for the natural world.

Our Board of Directors works hard to make our chapter one of the strongest in the organization. I'm proud to work with like-minded individuals who have a passion for making a difference in our region through our newsletters, website, monthly meetings, plant sales, and other activities. My first major undertaking in "going native" was killing grass to create woodland, savanna, and prairie beds in my yard. Since becoming a Wild Ones member, I've planted over 30 unique native tree and shrub species, 40 unique native woodland species, and 60 unique native prairie species. And I continue to buy native plants because there is always an empty area in my yard in need of another plant or two, or three! As a member of Wild Ones I also learn about opportunities to expand my University of Illinois Master Naturalist activities, continue my love of the natural world, and help spread the important message of using native plants and creating natural landscapes.

Merchandise Must Haves...

Submitted by Shey Lowman,
Merchandise Coordinator
shey@wildonesrrvc.org

NEW! Central Region Seedling ID Guide for Native Prairie Plants by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Missouri Department of Conservation. This 5" x 4" spiral bound laminated field guide fits in your pocket. It is the only guide showing plants from seed to seedling to mature plant for 40 species. **\$12.00**



Pale Purple Coneflower
Echinacea pallida

Pale Purple Coneflower *Echinacea pallida*

Distinguishing Characteristics:

- Hairy leaves with parallel veins and long-tapering leaf base.



Description:

- Height: Up to 3 feet
- Blooms: May – August
- Pollen on the anther is white
- Single showy flower head at the top of each stem, with many drooping pale purple petal-like ray flowers up to 3 1/2 inches long.
- Surrounding a broad, purplish brown, cone-shaped disk.
- A stout-stemmed plant, it has coarse, bristly hairs on the stems and leaves.



Comments:

- Found on glades, savannas, and prairies in the central tallgrass prairie region.
- Best in dry to average soils.
- May take three years to bloom after seeding.
- Common in wildflower seeding mixes and is easy to establish from seed.



Pale Purple Coneflower - Seedling



Pale Purple Coneflower - Juvenile

April speaker, Kay Charter leading a hike on Charter Sanctuary for the Leelanau Conservancy *photo by the Leelanau Conservancy*



2013 Chapter Programs and Events

April 18	"GROW A Birdfeeder" Saving Birds Through Habitat	Kay Charter Author, Co-owner of Charter Sanctuary, Ex. Dir. of Saving Birds Thru Habitat	Burpee Museum of Natural History
April 22	Woodland Plant Sale Orders Due	Barbara Flores , Woodland Plant Sale Coordinator 815-289-8602, Barbara@wildonesrrvc.org	
April 26 3:00 PM - 7:30 PM	Woodland Plant Sale Pickup	Barbara Flores Woodland Plant Sale Coord. 815-289-8602 Barbara@wildonesrrvc.org	Pickup Location 15813 Anderson Rd. Durand, IL 61024
April 27 9:00 AM - Noon			
April 29	Prairie Plant Sale Orders Due	Lenae Weichel, Coordinator 815-282-5482 Lenae@wildonesrrvc.org	
May 16 7:00-8:45 pm	Finding Emeralds in the Dust Kishwaukee River Corridor Green Infrastructure Plan using native species	Matthew Bardol Geosyntec	Burpee Museum of Natural History
May 17 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Prairie Plant Sale Pickup	Lenae Weichel, Coord. 815-282-5482 Lenae@wildonesrrvc.org	1438 Collingswood Dr Rockford, 61103
May 18 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.			
June 20 7:00-8:45 pm	Planting Natives to Attract Monarch Butterflies & Other Insects: WO Joint Venture	Patricia Miller	Burpee Museum of Natural History

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.
Please contact Lynda and Lee Johnson at (815) 629-2781 for more information.



ROCK RIVER VALLEY

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 **4/1/2013**, 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
Wild Ones Rock River Valley
5411 E. State Street PMB340
Rockford, IL 61108

Wild Ones - Rock River Valley Chapter

Board of Directors and Chairs

Co-Presidents: Bob Arevalo 815-332-3343

Bob@wildonesrrvc.org
Ginnie Watson 815-398-0138
Ginnie@wildonesrrvc.org

Vice President: Jerry Paulson 815-222-4414
jerry@wildonesrrvc.org

Past President: Constance McCarthy
815-282-0316 Constance@wildonesrrvc.org

Program Co-Chairs: Lynda and Lee Johnson
815-629-2781 LyndaLee@wildonesrrvc.org

Secretary: Shey Lowman 815-757-4456
Shey@wildonesrrvc.org

Treasurer: Janet Giesen 815-899-6139
Janet@wildonesrrvc.org

Membership Chair: Marilyn Heneghan
815-389-7869 Marilyn@wildonesrrvc.org

Newsletter Chair: Pambi Camacho
815-332-7637 Pambi@wildonesrrvc.org

Plant Rescues/Seed Collection Chair:
John Peterson 815-979-8539
John@wildonesrrvc.org

Show Me/Help Me Co-Chairs:
Mary Anne Mathwich 815-624-6301
MaryAnne@wildonesrrvc.org
Anita Johnson 815-226-1606
Anita@wildonesrrvc.org

Youth Education & Grants Chair:
Kim Lowman Vollmer 815-397-6044
Kim@wildonesrrvc.org

Prairie Plant Sale Coordinator: Lenae Weichel
815-282-5482 Lenae@wildonesrrvc.org

Woodland Plant Sale Coordinator:
Barbara Flores 815-289-8602
Barbara@wildonesrrvc.org

Tree & Shrub Sale Coordinator: John Peterson
815-979-8539 John@wildonesrrvc.org

Booth Coordinator, FREC Representative:
Tim Lewis 815-874-3468
Tim@wildonesrrvc.org

Lending Library Coordinator: Ginnie Watson
815-398-0138 Ginnie@wildonesrrvc.org

Mentor Coordinator: Barb Kuminowski
815-248-9263 Barb@wildonesrrvc.org

Merchandise/Website Coordinator:
Shey Lowman 815-757-4456
Shey@wildonesrrvc.org

Volunteer Coordinator: Cynthia Nelson
815-758-8978 Cynthia@wildonesrrvc.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 \$37, Limited Income/Full-Time Student \$20, Business \$250
Entire membership contribution is tax deductible. Contact Membership Chair for additional information or to join.

815-627-0344 • Visit our Web site at www.WildOnesRRVC.org

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.