

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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All articles for the August 2016 newsletter, must be submitted to:
Constance@wildonesrrvc.org
by July 23, 2016.

Members Only (i.e., members plus partner, significant other, friend, etc.)
Evening Social Potluck and Yard Tour – Rain or Shine

Thursday, July 21, 2016

Location: The home of Bob and Carolyn Arevalo
9293 Easton View Court
Rockford, IL 61107

Time: 6:00 p.m. (Note this start time is earlier than our monthly meetings)

Members are cordially invited to our home on Thursday, July 21 at 6:00 p.m. The event will take place rain or shine. Please bring a dish to pass and a lawn chair. Iced tea, lemonade, and water will be provided. Paper plates, napkins, cups, and forks will also be provided, but feel free to bring your own eating utensils if you prefer.



Our five-acre property has approximately three acres in a prairie restoration. Several forbs should be blossoming. There are walking paths around and through the property, so a stroll around is encouraged. There is also a water garden near the house which provides a popular bird bath for our feathered friends. We keep honeybees on the property that we can show you. Honeybees are usually active between around 10 a.m. and around 4 p.m., so they should be inside their colonies during our social.

We have lived here for 32 years and have tried to be responsible stewards of the property for the flora and fauna that live here. We happily coexist with them.

This is also a Show Me/Help Me event in the sense that you will be able to see a rural residential prairie and ask questions.

Message from the Co-President **Ginnie Watson**



Ginnie Watson

photo by Tim Lewis

The United States Marine Corps may only need a “few good men”, but we need many good men and women to maintain our numerous programs and member benefits. Our leaders hold their positions for one year beginning in January. We have already begun the search for these exceptional people for 2017 in order to insure a smooth transition and adequate time to acquaint them with their duties. The current position holder will also

mentor the new coordinator or board member throughout the first year, answering any questions and helping with any problems that may arise.

There are many opportunities for you to step up and become a leader in the Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter, including:

- **Booth Coordinator.** Maintains our chapter’s display booth (tri-panel display) and sees to it the booth is set up at every monthly meeting; arranges for the booth to attend five outside events, such as Bird Fest and Gardening for Food and Fun. The coordinator need not attend each meeting, as long as arrangements are made for the booth to be set up at the meeting. This position could be shared by two people as co-coordinators.
- **Show Me/Help Me Coordinator.** During a Show Me/Help Me event, members visit up to three other members’ properties or native landscaping projects to either admire the use of native plants in the landscape or to offer advice on which plants to use in landscaping the property or project area. This coordinator will plan at least two such events per year.
- **Treasurer.** This board member maintains the financial affairs of the chapter. Knowledge of Microsoft Excel would be very helpful.
- **Membership Coordinator.** Maintains the membership roster and facilitates the renewal and new member process. Knowledge of Microsoft Excel would be very helpful.
- **Co-President.** Works with the other co-president (Constance McCarthy) to see to it that the policies and procedures of the chapter are followed; presides at board meetings (six per



New member Celeste Jelinek talks to Booth Coordinator Tim Lewis *photo by Ginnie Watson*

year, with each co-president presiding over three); opens monthly meetings (again, dividing the task equally with the other co-president); and maintains open communication with the National Wild Ones office.

- **Greeters’ Table Coordinator.** Maintains and organizes name tags used at monthly meetings; maintains statistical information regarding monthly meetings (number of attendees, volunteers, etc.) for the newsletter and chapter records.
- **Constant Contact Coordinator.** Organizes the delivery of the newsletter via e-mail through Constant Contact; organizes the delivery of the chapter’s monthly news-blast via e-mail through Constant Contact. Content is provided by the Publicity Coordinator, and the chapter has created templates for these Constant Contact messages.

None of these positions is hard to do, but each is critical to the continued success of this chapter. There are detailed instructions for each of these positions and a “road map” to guide a newcomer in carrying out the assigned tasks. As you may have noticed from attending chapter events, the chapter is a well-oiled machine; things are in very good shape and streamlined procedures have been put in place over the years, making it even easier for a new person to step into any of the above vacancies.

If you haven’t participated at this level in our chapter before, now is the time to step up and give back to YOUR chapter. This is *your* chance to do *your* part to move *your* chapter forward. We are the largest chapter in Illinois and the second largest chapter

(continued on page 3)

Evening Social (cont'd from page 1)

Plant Share: Mary Anne Mathwich will host a plant share or exchange at the Arevalo property that evening. The plants to be shared will be a potluck of whatever members have decided to dig up from their yards and share. So bring your extra native plants to share with others. Contact Mary Anne for details; her information is on the back page of this newsletter.



In general terms, we are northeast of the Clock Tower. Garrett's restaurant is on the southeast corner of Bell School and Rote Roads. Go east on Rote Road (over the 90 toll road), stop at Lyford Road, and continue one mile east on Rote Road. Rote Road becomes Squaw Prairie Road when it enters Boone County. At that point, the road makes a jog. At that junction, Easton View Lane is on your right. Turn right and go south. The road curves east. The first right is Easton View Court. Turn right and go a short distance. Our house is on a cul-de-sac with three other houses. Our contemporary house has two red front doors, and our house number is clearly indicated on our mailbox. Please park on the street and walk down our driveway and around to the back of the house. Please do not park in the driveway.

For more information, please contact me at 815-332-3343 or at robertarevalo55@gmail.com

Board of Directors in Action **Cathy Johnson, Secretary**

Highlights of activities of the Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter Board of Directors, as discussed at the June 9, 2016 meeting, include the following:

- The Yard Tour 2017 committee has drawn up a list of potential tour sites and is visiting several of them this month to evaluate their possible inclusion.
- The board is exploring possible involvement in a new initiative being developed to create habitat corridors, a concept proposed by Doug Tallamy in recent years. Board members are meeting with representatives from the Chicago Area Living Corridor Alliance (CALCA) to learn what they are doing in that area, and with the Natural Land Institute, which will be coordinating plans west of the Chicago area.
- Woodland and prairie plant sales experienced another successful year, thanks to the work of all the coordinators and other volunteers.

Message from the Co-President (cont'd from page 1)

nationwide. That takes a big effort - an effort that is made manageable when shared by our hardworking board and coordinators. We need you to help us maintain our existing programs and continue to grow the chapter. Spend a few minutes to think of which position you might be willing to take on, and then

call me or e-mail me. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have. So let's talk!

I can be reached at (815)-398-0138 or Ginnie@wildonesRRVC.org

If not YOU, who? We are counting on you!

June Meeting Recap Constance McCarthy

photos by Khrista Miskell

The Balance of Design and Nature

Michael Herrenbruck, owner, Eco Harmony Landscape & Design LLC



Michael Herrenbruck and Guy Smith

At our June meeting, Mike Herrenbruck presented a case study of a native landscape that he installed, with the aim of helping us to understand what to expect in the trenches of landscaping with natives.

In his work, he takes much inspiration from settings found in the natural world. In an urban setting, his focus is on (1) form meeting function and (2) right plant, right place.

Many people say that they want “low maintenance” landscapes. In the long run, natives are the best bet because they will prevail in the long term. Again, right plants in the right places. One difficult point for some clients to accept is that hedges (in the manicured sense seen in a typical yard) are not part of a natural landscape. A sure way to enjoy a low-maintenance yard is to drastically reduce the amount of mowing that has been going on.

He applies what he called “the 70 mph test,” which aims to incorporate shapes and colors that you can see when flying past in a car. Within three to five years after being planted, the landscape should really take off. Patience is required, especially for perennials.

The presented case study was a home in Wauwatosa, a suburb of Milwaukee. The home was surrounded by a massive lawn (very far from

low maintenance). The home’s sump pump was draining right into the sewer system. Due to drainage issues, there were problems with ice in winter, and neighbors were complaining about water. Herrenbruck’s solution was to create an elongated rain garden. In some municipalities, there may be concerns with codes and inspectors, and some education of the particular person may be necessary (especially if the particular type of project is completely new to the inspector).

He uses a 75% - 25% mix of natives - non-natives. If he were to tell clients that they must have only 100% natives, they could refuse and insist on having no natives at all. He wants to turn people on to the benefits of natives; hopefully, they will see the benefits and

want to plant more. Some asked about his use of regionally appropriate plants as a focus. Many of his projects are dependent on the availability of plants and the client’s timeline. He characterized this as a conflict between the perfect world and reality and limitations.

Regarding the conceptual design, he hand-picks boulders and other hard features. Fortunately, in this case, the home owners were willing to let him run with it. The skeleton of the rain garden was the installation of the larger rocks. The area was marked with spray paint. He used a Dingo, a garden implement that can lift 1,000 pounds (almost like a glorified wheelbarrow). To replicate nature, think about contrasts, such as textures in foliage. Contrast is also desired when it comes to rocks. All rocks should not be the same size. He used Mississippi stone, with the largest ones the size of tennis ball, down to stones that were 1” in diameter. Decorative stone is worked in around the boulders. Soil that has been moved in creating the rain garden, can be used to create berms on the same property; don’t haul the dirt off site.

The next images were taken after grading and rock installation was completed. The feature now looks like a long, winding, curving bed. He also designed with neighbors in mind. The rain garden has great water holding capacity - something that will also

June Meeting Recap (cont'd)

better the situation of the neighbors who had complained about water problems. Indeed, water projects are often started following a complaint or when a situation is not right.

The next images were taken at the end of the first year following installation. The plants are still pretty small. Remember fall and winter interest when planning your landscape. Plants in this landscape include musclewood, fox sedge, blue flag iris, common strawberry, and Mugo pine that remains small.

By Year 3, the plants have really started to fill in. The home owner must keep up on maintenance in order for the project to continue to look like the designer's plans and drawings.

Originally, this subdivision was a golf course. Once the subdivision was constructed, there were problems with too much water holding capacity throughout the subdivision. A bioswale is one solution to this kind of problem.

He used a two-man auger to create holes filled in with stone in order to help water drain faster. A product sold at, for example, Home Depot in the drainage aisle, looks like a garbage can with holes in it. These can be stacked and filled with stone to increase water holding capacity. In the case study presented, almost all the water now stays in the garden. The city inspector was happy that the water was no longer going straight into the sewer system. There were also no longer problems related to ice forming in winter from the constantly running sump pumps. There were also no complaints about mosquitoes in the summers (a common misunderstanding of rain gardens).

By Year 4, the plants have filled in, and the rain



Bob Arevalo with Speaker Michael Herrenbruck

garden is very attractive. There were no problems with weeds growing in the basin of the rain garden.

In response to questions from folks at the meeting, the following points were made:

He advocates starting with the soil first, before putting in a single plant. He is especially fond of Purple Cow Organics, soil supplements that are like steroids for the soil. They are applied over the surface of the planting area to accelerate the filling in and growth of plants.

Regarding boulder installation and how to make a project look natural: He mainly uses Wisconsin black granite. In any case, use stone that is indigenous to the area in order to get the most natural look. Black granite is quite heavy compared to typical fieldstone. Depending on the overall aesthetic you are trying to achieve, his recommendation is to try to stick to a color palette that is complimentary. *(continued on page 6)*

June Meeting Recap (cont'd)



The chapter's display provides useful information.

Mississippi stone can be used as decorative stone; it come in a wide range of sizes. He likes a mix of largest and smallest, which seems to give the most contrast and be closest under the circumstances to appearing natural. It is also a cost-effective stone.

Character boulders are those with very striking features and which tend to have all-season interest. These can be found by hunting through the piles at quarries.

Corrugated pipe should no longer be used for drainage. A 4-inch smooth PVC pipe is connected to the downspout. Make sure that there is a clean-out near the initial elbow and/or a way to clear any debris or obstruction that may become lodged in the pipe. Smooth PVC pipe should eliminate most issues that would otherwise arise if there were a clog. The downspout can also be set up to drain into a catch basin (a box with grate on top). The grate can be removed for cleaning purposes. A rain barrel can be added to increase water retention on the property.

A mitered drain should be used at the end of the pipe, as this will better blend in with the grade. The additional cost of around \$45 is worth it, in his opinion.

Regarding *suggested plants*:

Musclewood (also called American hornbeam, *Carpinus caroliniana*) likes to be by water and tolerates wet feet. A slow growing, understory tree. It grows to 25-30 feet high x 25-30 feet wide. Can be multi-stemmed or single-stemmed.

St. John's wort. Grows to 2-4 feet tall. A good

alternative to boxwood. Compact, fills in, and has beautiful flowers.

Mugo pine (*Pinus mugo*) "Slowmound" stays small. It can be replaced with native common juniper (although these can grow to 8 feet x 8 feet).

Wild strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*). Can be used as a nice groundcover, and is not expensive. Attracts butterflies, birds, and pollinators. He has used it in rain gardens.

Blue flag iris (*Iris versicolor*) should be placed nearest to where water will come out. It attracts hummingbirds and grow to 2-3 feet high.

Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*). Deer resistant, grows to 2-3 feet high. Can tolerate part shade.

Leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*). Deer resistant, attracts butterflies and pollinators; grows to 2-3 feet high.

Sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*). Full sun to part shade; amazing texture contrast can be used to conjure images of a river's edge. This is not a typical fern like ostrich or cinnamon ferns. It looks good from the get-go, right after planting.

New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*). Butterflies, pollinators, and hummingbirds are attracted to it, and it is deer resistant. Although he has not had success with it, several chapter members have had good success.

Bottle gentian (*Gentiana andrewsii*). Likes moist or wet soil, and blooms August to October. Grows 1-2 feet tall.

Fox sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*). He is a huge fan of sedges, in part because of their beautiful color variations. Mix them in with other ornamental grasses.

Prairie blazing star (*Liatris pycnostachya*). Grows to 3-5 feet tall, and attracts butterflies, pollinators, birds, and hummingbirds. Deer resistant.

Blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*). He loves this plant. Especially when massed, exceptionally striking.

He uses mixed hardwood (not dyed) mulch, particularly double-shredded.

The home in this case study won a lawn of distinction award from the town. This is especially appreciated because one of the criteria is that the landscape not appear to be "weedy".

Membership Update **Ginnie Watson, Interim Membership Coordinator**

A membership e-form and our membership brochure describing the benefits of membership are both available on the chapter website (www.wildonesrrvc.org). Click on **Join/Renew** under the **Membership** tab. You can renew (or join) with any major credit card through PayPal (no PayPal account required) by using our website. We appreciate your support!

224 memberships as of June 23, 2016

Special thanks to our members who made contributions above the basic \$37 dues!

Jeffrey Stack, Roscoe
Cathy Johnson, Rockford
Diana Wiemer, Durand
Mike & Deb Eickman, Rockton
Ron Dierks, Caledonia
Kay Blair, Belvidere

Welcome our new members!

Pam May

New members are identified with a green ribbon on their meeting name badges. Please introduce yourself to them and help us welcome all new members to our great chapter!

70 attended the June meeting, including at least 15 guests.

A big thank you to our May meeting volunteers!

Greeters: Jane Evans, Barbara Kober, Janaan Lewis

Refreshments: Khrista Miskell, Anita Johnson

AV/Sound Equipment: Bob Arevalo

Meeting Recap for the Newsletter: Constance McCarthy

Photographer: Ginnie Watson, Khrista Miskell

Library Assistants: Cathy Johnson, Karen Matz

Anniversaries

10 years:

Barb Kuminowski
Ron & Francys Johnson
Robert Lindvall

It is preferred that renewal memberships be sent directly to the chapter for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. Remember that your dues include membership in *both* National Wild Ones and our chapter. Please use the address below:

Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter
1643 N Alpine Rd Ste 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107-1464

Your expiration date is on your chapter newsletter and your national Journal address labels. You will be mailed a renewal reminder from the chapter two months prior to your expiration date with a completed membership form and return envelope for your convenience.

Twenty-five percent of all dues paid (about \$9.25 per membership) is returned to the chapter by National Wild Ones to support our chapter activities. National Wild Ones provides liability insurance for our meetings and events. All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.

Please send address and email address changes to the Membership Coordinator at membership@wildonesrrvc.org. Email or call (815) 627-0343 if you have any questions about membership.

Wild Ones Annual Memberships: Household \$37, Associate (student, senior, disabled) \$20, Affiliate Non-Profit Organization or Educator \$90, Business \$250.

Thank you for your continuing support!



2016 Chapter Programs and Events

July 21 6:00 p.m.	Summer Evening Social & Potluck Members only	Carolyn & Bob Arevalo	Carolyn & Bob Arevalo's home in rural Boone County
August 18 7:00-9:00 pm	Winter Trees: How to Know Your Ash from a Pole in the Ground	Jack Shouba, instructor at Morton Arboretum	Rock Valley College P.E. Center PEC 0110 (lower level)
September 15 7:00-9:00 pm	Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home video Tentative	Video produced by Catherine Zimmerman, Hometown Habitat	Rock Valley College P.E. Center PEC 0110 (lower level)

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.

For more information please contact Lisa Johnson at (815) 881-1014



NATIVE PLANTS. NATURAL LANDSCAPES

ROCK RIVER VALLEY

ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Pambi Camacho
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107

Don't become extinct!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is **7/1/2016**, this is your last chapter newsletter and you have received your last Wild Ones *Journal* until you renew your membership. National Wild Ones drops expired memberships the first week of the expiration month, so please don't be late! See the *Membership Update* for renewal information.

Mail your renewal:

Wild Ones Rock River Valley
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Wild Ones Mission

Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization.

Rock River Valley Chapter Meetings

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Rock Valley College, Woodward Technology Center (WTC), 3301 N. Mulford Rd., Rockford, IL.

Special meetings, outings, and events are scheduled periodically and sometimes replace the regular meeting. Contact any officer to confirm information about our next meeting.

Rock River Valley Chapter Board and Coordinators

Board

Co-Presidents: **Ginnie Watson**
(815) 398.0138 ginnie@wildonesrrvc.org

Constance McCarthy (815) 282.0316
constance@wildonesrrvc.org

Vice President: **Jerry Paulson**
(815) 222.4414 jerry@wildonesrrvc.org

Secretary: **Cathy Johnson** (815) 978.0865
cathy@wildonesrrvc.org

Treasurer: **Janet Giesen** (815) 899.6139
janet@wildonesrrvc.org

At-Large: **Doreen O'Brien** (815) 985.4064
doreen@wildonesrrvc.org

At-Large: **Kim Lowman Vollmer**
(815) 397.6044 kim@wildonesrrvc.org

Immediate Past President:
Lenae Weichel (815) 282.5482
lenaew@wildonesrrvc.org

Coordinators

Membership (interim): **Ginnie Watson** (as to the left)

Newsletter-Production: **Pambi Camacho**
(815) 332.7637 pambi@wildonesrrvc.org

Newsletter-Editorial: **Constance McCarthy**
(as above)

Volunteers: **Khrisa Miskell**
(815) 298.5449 khrisa@wildonesrrvc.org

Woodland Plant Sale: **Jodell & Marty Gabriel**
(815) 963.2137 jodell@wildonesrrvc.org
marty@wildonesrrvc.org

Prairie Plant Sale: **Rick Freiman**
(815) 871.7424 rick@wildonesrrvc.org

Tree & Shrub Sale: **John Peterson**
(815) 979.8539 john@wildonesrrvc.org

Plant Rescues & Seed Collection:
Mary Anne Mathwich (815) 721.5187
maryanne@wildonesrrvc.org

Programs: **Lisa Johnson** (815) 881.1014
lisa@wildonesrrvc.org

Show Me/Help Me: **Claudia Fleeman**
(815) 985.5158 claudia@wildonesrrvc.org

Youth Education & Grants:
Kim Lowman Vollmer (as above)

Booth, FREC rep., website: **Tim Lewis**
(815) 874.3468 tim@wildonesrrvc.org

Facebook: **Marilyn Heneghan**
(815) 389.7869 marilyn@wildonesrrvc.org

Library: **Ginnie Watson** (as above)

Mentors: **Melanie Costello** (815) 645.8430
melanie@wildonesrrvc.org

Merchandise: **Cynthia Chmell**
(815) 969.7435 chmell@wildonesrrvc.org

Publicity: **Doreen O'Brien** (as above)

Meeting Recaps: **Pat Hollingsworth**
(815) 627.9180 pat@wildonesrrvc.org