

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

Inside this Issue:

Message from the Co-President	2
Board in Action	3
February Meeting Recap	3-6
Membership	7
Chapter Calendar	7
Chapter Contact Information	8



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



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

Bumble Bees and Other Native Pollinators
Thursday, March 17, 2016

Location: Rock Valley College,
Woodward Technology Center (WTC)
3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, IL 61114

Time: 7:00 p.m.



Our native pollinators are a fascinating and important part of our lives and our landscapes. They pollinate most flowering plants, including many of our crops and the plants that provide food and habitat for wildlife.

Pollinator populations influence and reflect the health of the environment, which directly affects human health and well-being.

Northern Illinois has a lot of different species of native pollinators, but many of their populations are declining. Gardeners can be directly involved in their survival. This program will acquaint you with some of our bees, and show you why and how to lend them a hand and give them a place in your garden.

Naturalist Barbara Williams will use photos she has taken during her explorations as an Illinois Bee Spotter in our region, to open our eyes to our amazing local species.

Barbara managed the biology department at the Burpee Museum for about a decade. She has been studying our local bumble bees for several years, photographing them and documenting their ranges and locating populations of rare bumble bees. She's a long-time naturalist, a native plant enthusiast, and an avid birder.

This program is free and open to the public.
Call (815) 494.6977 for more information

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



Ginnie Watson

photo by Tim Lewis

Our Rock River Valley Chapter has made some significant improvements these last several years. Inexplicably, however, we have experienced a drop in members willing to volunteer for our many activities.

We have grown by more than 40 members, remaining steady at around 215. We won the prestigious Atwood Award, as have quite a number of our members through

the years – including Lenae Weichel, who won it last year as she served as our co-president, and Tim Lewis, our national president. We moved our meetings to Rock Valley College to be more centrally located, making it easier for outlying members to join us for our monthly programs. We added plant sharing as a very popular member benefit. We moved our plant sale location to a single site, making it more convenient and easier to remember when picking up your plant orders. And, there have been other enhancements to our chapter, as well. After so much forward progress, I am left wondering why the decrease in interested volunteers.

It occurs to me that perhaps it is our very success that is the reason. Perhaps our members think that this great forward momentum will simply carry us upward and onward with no need of further assistance. Nothing could be further from the truth! We are an *all volunteer organization*, at the chapter level. Everyone – from plant sale assistants to board members – is a volunteer. Everyone – from lecture/landscape team members to display booth assistants – is a volunteer. Everyone from library assistants to members who offer their own landscapes for a show me/help me event – is a volunteer. The program committee, which brings you such wonderful monthly programs... volunteers.

It is possible you think that all these

positions require the level of experience that you do not have. After all, you joined Wild Ones to learn about growing natives. Think about it: what better way to gain experience than to work with others who have performed the task. It is a win-win situation. You offer as much time as you are comfortable giving to a growing organization, and the chapter gains your help. All of us who donate our time to Wild Ones enjoy the experience, as well as the pleasure of meeting new friends and learning more about a subject we all love. Need I mention that it *feels good* to give your time as a volunteer, knowing that your organization is benefitting as well?

Becoming a volunteer is easy. There are two routes to becoming a valued volunteer. Visit our website, www.wildonesrrvc.org, and take the volunteer survey which is located at the top of the home page. If you would prefer to speak with someone personally, you may contact Khrista Miskell at Khrista@wildonesrrvc.org or (815) 298-5449. We are also looking for some dedicated people for several board and coordinator positions which will need to be filled for 2017, as well. Those positions are listed on the chapter website under *More Information*.

Come join us as a Rock River Valley Wild Ones volunteer! I look forward to working with you!



**Marcia DeClerk and Cathy Johnson,
Library Volunteers**

photo by Ginnie Watson

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 February 11, 2016 meeting, include the following:

- Steve Windsor, treasurer for Wild Ones National, presented a review of National's budget and finances and answered questions.
- The new policy board structure was implemented at this meeting and will be further refined as time goes on.
- Planning has begun for a 2017 event, which will be similar to the yard tour event of 2014.
- The Woodland Plant Sale is currently underway.

February Meeting Recap Cathy Johnson

photos by Pat Hollingsworth



Ed Cope and Bristol

Native Orchids of Winnebago County

Ed Cope, restoration ecologist for the Natural Land Institute, opened his presentation by emphasizing the uniqueness of orchids. These plants hold a fascination for humans that is, perhaps, unmatched by any other plant. Characteristics that make orchids so unique include (1) the vast number of species - more than 25,000 currently accepted, with more to be discovered, (2) their existence for millions of years, (3) their nutrient-dependent relationship with fungi, (4) the intricate adaptations they've developed to attract specific pollinators, and (5) vast differences in morphology between species, from some of the tiniest flowers in the world to some of the largest. The Midwest has

historically been a very good region for orchids, although some of the species have disappeared over time. Some of the best habitat can be found in boggy areas around the Great Lakes region.

From their earliest days, orchids have had to surmount many obstacles in order to survive and reproduce. Their seeds are among the smallest and most vulnerable - typically an embryo with an extremely thin seed coat, rather than the well-defined endosperm of other seeds. This lack of nutrients to support the seed's development presents the plant with enormous odds against its survival, and has led to the orchid's development of a relationship with fungi and vast numbers of seeds produced by single plants. The seeds, which are often the size of a dust particle, with as many as a million in one pod, are most commonly dispersed into the wind. When and if they land on soil, they must quickly find a source of sustenance. The seed invites a fungus into its seed coat, a behavior which often proves fatal when the fungus acts as a parasite and consumes the embryo. However, sometimes the embryo finds just the right fungus that feeds the embryo and with which it develops a relationship, and the fungus and the orchid grow and develop together. If you were to dig up an orchid, you would find its roots entwined with mycelium that can extend out several feet beyond what its own roots would. Sometimes an orchid doesn't even bother producing its own roots; it just lets the fungus do all the work. Typically, the life of an orchid is very tenuous and short.

Orchids and Humankind

The word "orchid" comes from the Greek word "orkhis," which means testicle, which the orchid's bulbous roots resemble. In his travels around the world, English physician Dr. Nathaniel Bagshaw

February Meeting Recap (con'td)



Ed Cope shaking hands with 2 guests

Ward developed an interest in orchids, along with other tropical plants and moths. In attempting to find a method to transport plants from other countries back to England, Ward invented what came to be called the Wardian case. These tightly constructed wood and glass cases are more commonly known as terrariums. Ward brought back large numbers of tropical plants, including orchids, from Australia and the Pacific islands. These cases were soon mass produced and used all over England, allowing the English to indulge a growing obsession with orchids. This soon led to what has been referred to as the mid-19th century "orchid delirium." Among those stricken with this delirium was Charles Darwin, whose studies of orchids, and the adaptations among those plants and their pollinators, is believed to have led to some of his theories of evolution.

While this public interest led to a vastly expanded knowledge of orchids, it also led to their exploitation and often to extinction of species. Orchids are very delicate plants, and the environment of Victorian England, especially in London during the early industrial era, with its heavily polluted air, was not conducive to their health. Although the orchid interest spread to the United States, the craze did not become as strong as it had been across the Atlantic. Nevertheless, an interest developed on the east coast, and a demand was created for orchids, which collectors and vendors tried to satisfy with plants from the Great Lakes area in particular. One orchid

vendor in Indiana advertised the sale of a dozen species or so, which he offered by the tens, hundreds, or thousands, and all of which were collected within 10 miles of his home. At one time, some species of orchids were among the most common wildflowers in the Midwest, but most are very susceptible to disturbance, and the growth of agriculture and overharvesting of the plants has dramatically reduced their numbers here.

Today there are two vendors in this region that cultivate orchids rather than harvesting them from the wild. Cope recommends that anyone interested in growing native orchids

in this area go only through these vendors in obtaining plants for themselves. Both sources propagate only species of *Cypripedium*, lady's slippers. Spangle Creek Labs (<http://www.spanglecreeklabs.com>) produces laboratory-grown seedlings, and has developed a method for growing the lady's slipper seeds in vials of a liquid solution of nutrients which greatly increases germination. The tiny orchid seeds must develop in total darkness to produce the protocorms (the beginnings of the tiny orchid roots) from the embryos. When the protocorms are large enough to survive on their own, they're transferred to a gel solution until they develop leaves. At that point, they're placed in refrigeration until sold.

Itasca Ladyslipper Farm (<http://ladyslipperfarm.com>) sells *Cypripedium* plants acquired as seedlings from Spangle Creek. They use their alchemy to successfully plant them in soil without the mycelia relationship, and nurture the plants to maturity - often a 10- to 20-year process, after which time they are sold to the public.

The propagation of these plants is a very involved and expensive process; so, for the foreseeable future, most of our orchid species are likely to remain rare.

Winnebago County Orchid Species

There are 20 species of native orchids that currently grow, or have grown in the past, in Winnebago County or nearby areas. Orchids are monocotyledons, having just one seed leaf. Their flowers come in parts of three, with three sepals

February Meeting Recap (con'td)

and three petals. One of these petals is enlarged into what is called a lip, which typically acts as a landing pad for pollinators. Orchids have adapted a variety of methods to attract pollinators. Some of these involve structural changes, resulting in appendages which closely resemble a female bee or wasp of the species that pollinates the flower. This trickery attracts males, which end up transferring the plant's pollen in some very creative ways. Additionally, the plants emit pheromones that further confuse the male pollinators into thinking they are being lured by a female bee or wasp.

The following list of plants includes the common name, scientific name (with a translation of the scientific name offered by the speaker to provide insight into the meaning of the name and characteristics of the plant), wetland status and floristic quality index, the preferred habitat, months they can typically be found, and current status (threatened or endangered).

Puttyroot (*Aplectrum hyemale*: *aplektron* - "without spur", *hyemale* - "winter", FAC C=10). Rich mesic woods, particularly with maple; early May to mid June.

Grass-pink orchid (*Calopogon tuberosus*: *kalos pogon* - "beautiful beard", *tuberosus* - "tuberous", OBL C=10). Peaty bogs, fens. May disappear for extended periods of time; mid May-late July. State endangered.

Frog orchid (*Coeloglossum viride*: *Koilos glossa* - "hollow tongue", *viride* - "green", UPL C=10). Mesic woods, clifftops, and slopes; early May-late June.

Spotted coral root (*Corallorhiza maculata*: *Korallian rhiza* - "coral root", *maculata* - "spotted", FACU C=10). Dry, often sandy woods. May disappear for extended periods of time; mid July-mid September. State threatened.

Late coral root (*Corallorhiza odontorhiza*: *Korallian rhiza* - "coral root", *odontorhiza* - "toothed

root", UPL C=9). Dry woods, successional areas; apparently becoming more common in our area; mid August-early November

White lady's slipper (*Cypripedium candidum*: *Kyprispedis* - "Aphrodite foot", *candidum* - "white", OBL C=10). Calcareous prairies and fens, limy thickets; early May to early July. State threatened.

Small yellow lady's slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum*: *Kyprispedis* - "Aphrodite foot", *parviflorum* - "small flower", OBL C=10) Calcareous swales, particularly in light shade; mid May-mid June. State endangered.

Large yellow lady's slipper (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens*: *Kyprispedis* - "Aphrodite foot", *parviflorum* - "small flower", *pubescens* - "downy", FAC C=10). East- and west-facing slopes of upland forests; mid April-mid June. State endangered.

Showy lady's slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*: *Kyprispedis* - "Aphrodite foot", *reginae* - "queen", FAW C=10). Mucky fens, swales, and bogs. Not seen in our county since 1872; late May-early July. State endangered

Showy orchis (*Galearis spectabilis*: *Galae* - "hood", *spectabilis* - "showy", UPL C=10). Mesic forests and ravines, particularly with maple; early April-early June

Rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*: *Goodyera* - "John Goodyear", *pubescens* - "downy", FAC C=9). Sandy, acidic soils and successional areas. Apparently becoming more common in our area; early July-late August

Purple twayblade (*Liparis liliifolia*: *Liparis* - "greasy", *liliifolia* - "lily-leaved", FAC C=6). Regrowth forests, successional areas. Apparently becoming more common in our area; early May-mid July

Green twayblade (*Liparis loeselii*: *Liparis* - "greasy", *loeselii* - "Johann Loesel", FACW C=7). Calcareous, peaty, or sandy wetlands. Often associates with

Indicator code	Indicator status	Comment
OBL	Obligate wetland	Almost always occur in wetlands
FACW	Facultative wetland	Usually occur in wetlands, but may occur in non-wetlands
FAC	Facultative	Occur in wetlands and non-wetlands
FACU	Facultative upland	Usually occur in non-wetlands, but may occur in wetlands
UPL	Obligate upland	Almost never occur in wetlands

February Meeting Recap (con'td)

sedges; mid May-late June

North wind bog orchid (*Platanthera aquilonis*: *Platys anthera* - "broad anther", *aquilonis* - "of the north wind", FACW C=10). Calcareous, peaty wetlands with cold groundwater. Not seen in our county since 1871; early June-late July

Ragged fringed orchid (*Platanthera lacera*: *Platys anthera* - "broad anther", *lacera* - "torn", FACW C=10). Bogs, peaty sand areas, mesic prairies; early June-late July.

Eastern prairie fringed orchid (*Platanthera leucophaea*: *Platys anthera* - "broad anther", *leucophaea* - "white and gray", FACW C=10). Sedge meadows, mesic prairies. Not seen in our county for many years, but may disappear for extended periods of time; mid June-late July. Federally threatened; state endangered

Small purple fringed orchid (*Platanthera psychodes*: *Platys anthera* - "broad anther", *psychodes* - "butterfly", FACW C=10). Shady seeps, particularly with sandy muck. May disappear for extended periods of time; early June-mid August. State endangered.

Nodding lady's tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*: *Speira anthos* - "coiled flower", *cernua* - "nodding", FACW C=7). Sandy bogs, calcareous woodlands, and successional areas; mid July-early November

Great Plains lady's tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*: *Speira anthos* - "coiled flower", *magnicamporum* - "of the Great Plains", FAC C=8). Dry and mesic prairies, particularly on calcareous soils; early September-early November

Three birds orchid (*Triphora trianthophora*: *Triphora* - "threefold", *trianthophora* - "bearing three flowers", FACU C=10). Rich mesic woods, particularly with maple. Not seen in our county for many years; mid July-late September

Additional Resources

BONAP , Biota of North America Program, www.bonap.org , provides an atlas which shows geographic distribution of these orchids and other plants in North America.

Orchids of Indiana, by Michael A. Homoya, published by Indiana University Press, and *Orchids of the Western Great Lakes Region*, by Frederick W. Case, Jr., published by the Cranbrook Institute of Science (available in our chapter's library).

The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) has a searchable gallery with photos and information on

Illinois plants, available at <http://wwx.inhs.illinois.edu/find>.

The INHS also provides a link to an article describing the protocol for assigning an integer from 0 to 10 as a coefficient of conservatism (C). John B. Taft, Gerould S. Wilhelm, Douglas M. Ladd, and Linda A. Masters. Floristic Quality Assessment for Vegetation in Illinois, available at http://wwx.inhs.illinois.edu/files/5413/4021/3268/Wilhelm_Illinois_FQA.pdf.

The Illinois Wildflowers website has photographs and information on many of the fern species of Illinois, available at <http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info>.

USDA Wetland Indicator Status, available at <http://plants.usda.gov/wetinfo.html>.

And, from the recap writer, here is a link to a David Attenborough video clip of the work of mimicry and pheromone trickery between wild orchids and bees and wasps: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-h8I3cqp9nA>.



Anita Johnson and Khrista Miskell

Membership Update Shey Lowman, 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!

213 memberships as of February 23, 2016

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

Ron Hendrickson, Rockford, IL
Mark Luthin, Belvidere, IL
Pat & Dave Schubert, Rockford, IL

Welcome our new members!

Bruce & Celeste Jelinek, Rockford, IL

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!

59 attended the February meeting, including 12 guests.

A big thank you to our February meeting volunteers!

Greeters: Janaan Lewis, Janet Giesen

Refreshments: Khrista Miskell

A special thank you to **Ron Hendrickson** for his very generous donation to pay for our refreshments!

AV/Sound Equipment: Bob Arevalo

Meeting Recap for the Newsletter: Cathy Johnson

Photographer: Pat Hollingsworth

Library Assistants: Marcia De Clerk, Cathy Johnson

Anniversaries

Congratulations to this month's loyal members!

10 Years

Denise & Jim Miglin, Rockton, IL

5 Years

Claudia & Stephen Fleeman, Rockford, IL

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 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) are 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

March 17 7:00 p.m.	Bumble Bees and Other Native Pollinators	Barbara Williams	Rock Valley College Woodward Technology Center
March-April	Native Woodland Plant Sale Orders taken until April 18	Marty & Jodell Gabriel woodland@wildonesrrvc.org www.wildonesrrvc.org/Plant_Sales.html 815-963-2137	
April 21 7:00 p.m.	Edible and Medicinal Native Herbs: The Past, The Present, The Future	Bill Handel Illinois Natural History Survey	Rock Valley College Woodward Technology Center

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 **3/1/2016**, 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
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Prairie Plant Sale: Rick Freiman
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Programs: Lisa Johnson (815) 881.1014
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Show Me/Help Me: Claudia Fleeman
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Youth Education & Grants:
Kim Lowman Vollmer (as above)

Booth, FREC Representative: Tim Lewis
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