

*Promoting Native  
Plants for Natural  
Landscapes.*

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information about  
Rock River Valley  
Wild Ones

[www.wildonesrrvc.org](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org)

All articles for the  
July 2024 newsletter, must be  
submitted to:

[wildonesrockrivervalley@  
gmail.com](mailto:wildonesrockrivervalley@gmail.com)

by June 20, 2024.

## FROM PRAIRIE TO VASE:

## A WORKSHOP ON HOW TO ENJOY YOUR WILDFLOWER BLOOMS INDOORS

**Thursday, June 20, 2024 | 6:00 pm**

**NOTE LOCATION - Paulson Farm, 4601 Paulson  
Rd. Caledonia, IL 61011**

**PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED - LIMITED TO 24  
PARTICIPANTS: <http://wildonesrrvc.org/>**

Our own Jerry Paulson and Linda Ricker will present a workshop on bringing the beauty of your summer prairie flowers and grasses into your home to enjoy, with advice on selecting and conditioning flowers for cut arrangements, picking the proper container, floral design principles and prolonging the life of your flowers. Containers, flowers and foliage will be provided to make your own arrangement; you can also bring your own cut flowers from home if you have a favorite you want to include. Tables will be provided, but bring a lawn chair and floral shears.

Besides being President of WORRV and a long-time conservationist, Jerry has a degree in Ornamental Horticulture and spent many years working in flower shops. His floral arrangements using prairie plants win blue ribbons at the Boone County Fair every year.

Linda, Vice President of WORRV, also has a degree in Ornamental Horticulture as well as Landscape Design and is a Master Naturalist. She was a floral designer for 15 years at Michaels Craft Stores and several flower shops. She is owner of Lejoi Design, a landscape design consultant, and a former teacher for Illinois Extension. Pre-registration for this free workshop is required. To register go to our website at [www.wildonesrrvc.org](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org). This program will NOT be live-streamed. For more information call Jerry Paulson at 815-222-4414.



**Wildflower arrangement  
by Jerry Paulson**

*Save the Date for our Upcoming 30th Anniversary Event:*

July 20 | **Founders Celebration and Members Picnic**, 9 am to 1 pm at Jarrett Prairie Center in Byron, *See our website for more details.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT Jerry Paulson



Jerry Paulson

We just completed the largest, most successful native plant sale in all the years our chapter has been selling plants! More than 500 people came to my farm to pick-up the plants that they pre-ordered or to buy plants at the public sale. We also

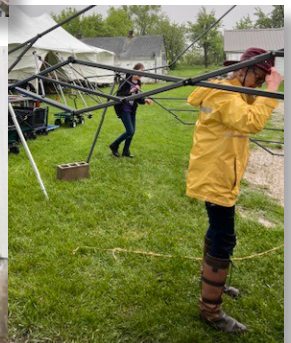
had plants for sale and information about pollinators at Nicholas Conservatory's butterfly exhibit on Saturday and Sunday of the plant sale weekend. By noon on Saturday, we were sold out of plants!

This is our only fundraiser for the chapter, and it is planned and executed entirely by volunteers. The planning team included Ginnie Watson, Janet Giesen, Linda Ricker and Gloria Powell. They ordered plants, tents and lights in the barn, created a new online order form, and tracked the pre-orders to make sure we had enough plants. Kim Lowman Vollmer coordinated all of the volunteers. We had 107 volunteers who helped with setting up and taking down the tables, unloading and labeling the plants, pulling orders, helping shoppers with the plants, and parking. Mark Luthin did a great job dealing with all the shoppers who arrived all at once on Friday, filling the parking spaces and lining up along the road!

We tracked 600 hours of volunteer time just during the plant sale week...thank you all the volunteers. Thank you also to everyone on the planning committee, and to Jessie Mermel, Dawn Skupien, Cathy Johnson and Sally Krebs for all of the great publicity and social media. A special thank you to Jane Evans who provided advice to the sale committee and volunteered at the sale at Nicholas Conservatory on Saturday. Finally, thank you to the plant nurseries that provided the healthy plants for the sale.

The plant sale committee is already making plans for next year's sale. They are out visiting other native plant sales in the region, streamlining the order process, reviewing the lists of plants, and ordered more plants to participate in the Garden Fair at Klehm Arboretum in early June. If you want to help with next year's plant sale, contact one of the committee members or email Janet at [janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com).

To view our photo gallery of the plant sale, visit: <https://bit.ly/PlantSale2024Photos>



**Setting up the tents in the morning and holding them down during the storm! Volunteers saved all the plants, the tents were not so lucky. Photos by Jessie Crow Mermel and Linda Ricker.**



## MAY MEETING RECAP: Jerry Paulson

Dr. Elizabeth Bach, Research Scientist at The Nature Conservancy's Nachusa Grasslands Preserve near Dixon, Illinois, presented a summary of twenty years of botanical monitoring data from the preserve to evaluate the impact of management practices and the introduction of bison on the native and reconstructed prairies and savanna on the preserve. The grassland preserve was started in 1986 when TNC acquired the first 400 acres to protect remnant hilltop prairies. Since then, it has grown to 4,000 acres of mostly reconstructed prairie, wetland, and oak savanna. The area supports 700 native plant species, 250 bird species, and 270 species of bees! It is also home to a herd of 100 bison that are allowed to roam freely over one-third of the preserve, about 1,500 acres.



Photo by Jerry Paulson

The research data showed that there was no loss of species due to management practices, but changes in vegetation structure increased the diversity of plants. Management of the vegetation includes prescribed fire, brush removal and grazing.

The impact of the bison herd on the plant communities is monitored by collecting data from 22 small fenced enclosures that prevent grazing. The data showed that there was

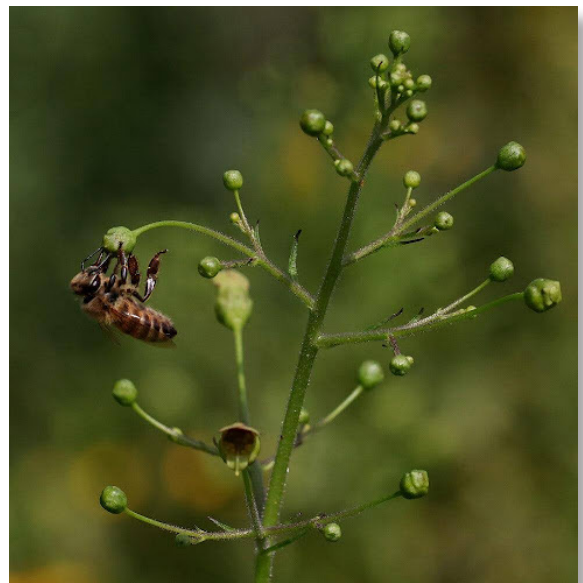
no effect of grazing on plant diversity across the habitats or in the grass to forb ratio during the first five years. The data found that the impact of management practices on small animal populations was more important than the effects of grazing..

In 1996, TNC started a long-term ecological monitoring program at the preserve by establishing permanent transects through the various habitats. When Dr. Bach was hired in 2018, there were 20 years of sampling data from 12 of the transects that she was able to use to analyze the impact of the various management practices and the bison herd on plant diversity, rare plants, and small animals.

Long-term monitoring will continue to determine the effect of the bison on the plant community, Dr. Bach said. Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter has supported the research by grants to Friends of Nachusa Grassland. To learn more about the grasslands, or to visit go to [www.nachusagrasslands.org](http://www.nachusagrasslands.org). The program was recorded and is available on our website: [www.wildonesrrvc.org](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org).

## IN MY YARD Jane Evans

It was a free-for-all nectar buffet! Somehow the word had gotten to the pollinator and hummingbird community that there was an eat-all-you-want dining experience in the Evans' backyard. They all came to make use of the copious amounts of nectar coming from the tiniest of flowers on our figworts. Late figwort (*Scrophularia marilandica*) isn't an eye-catching plant: in fact, it is rather spindly. But at 6 ft. tall in our partly shaded backyard, its nectar value is unprecedented. As we were examining a figwort stem at the end of the season, we noticed that there were insects overwintering inside the stems at the leaf axle. It's important to leave these outstanding, hard working plants up over the winter to protect some of next year's pollinator life. This outstanding photo was taken by Debbie Roos, Cooperative Extension Agent.



# PLANT SALE 2024 RECAP **Gloria Powell**



A huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who was involved in the 2024 native plant sale! This year's sale was remarkable for the number of pre-orders, number of volunteers, and total number of volunteer hours. Volunteers are the heart of an organization, and our volunteers really stepped up to help. From setting up the tables, unloading plants from the trucks, affixing price labels to stakes, putting stakes in plants, organizing plants, pulling preorders, bringing orders to customers, directing traffic, and finally to helping people choose/buy plants, our volunteers helped to make this sale a success. Several of our volunteers helped on multiple days, some could only help for a morning or afternoon, but we needed all of you!

New this year was our online order system. This allowed customers to know when a plant was sold out. It also allowed us to determine that a plant was popular enough to order additional quantities. We still had plenty of people ordering by mail on the brochure.

As usual, the weather during the week of setup and sale was fickle. Temperatures were mild for most of the week, and the rain was generally a minor inconvenience—with the exception of the storm that went through on Tuesday afternoon that wiped out our 3 canopies that we had erected that morning. As a result, we moved the order pickup to the INSIDE of the barn and worked out a new process that kept all of us dry and away from the weather.



Thank you to Jerry Paulson for again allowing us the use of his barn and grounds for the week of the sale. Thank you to Kim



Lowman Vollmer for coordinating the volunteers for the sale. As orders kept coming in unprecedented numbers, our need for volunteers kept increasing, and Kim did an incredible job convincing more people to help. Thank you to the plant committee: Janet Giesen, Ginnie Watson, and Gloria Powell, for all the hours choosing and ordering plants, and organizing the myriad details of the sale.

Ginnie spent many hours entering all of the plants into the online system and making it operational, then monitoring the online orders and processing the brochure orders that were sent in. Janet Giesen worked with the vendors, set up the brochure, and kept the committee organized. Gloria created excellent signs, eagerly took

on tasks that kept the planning process going and helped organize the plants in the barn and sales tent (and was our second cashier!). And thank you to Jane Evans, for ordering and picking up the shrubs for the sale and coordinating and staffing the booth at Nicholas Conservatory during the weekend of the sale.

**THANK YOU** to all who purchased plants, either through pre-orders or in person at the sale. Your support of Wild



Ones Rock River Valley Chapter allows us bring the focus of native plants to the community, spreading the word about the importance of native plants to increasing biodiversity and promoting environmentally sound landscaping practices.

Be sure to watch your newsletter for information about the fall Tree and Shrub Sale, offering a variety of native species that attract birds and other wildlife throughout the year.

## **PLANT SALE BY THE NUMBERS:**

**107** Volunteers

**231** Customer Pre-orders

**599** Volunteer Hours during the week of the sale

**8494** Individual Plants Ordered

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE **Sallie Krebs, 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](http://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.

### **208 memberships as of May 23, 2024**

### **Special thanks to our members who made contributions above the basic \$40 dues!**

Dianne & Dennis Stenerson, Rockford

Perry & Debbie Gay, Rockford

### **Welcome to our new member(s)!**

Jessica Beaudoin, Belvidere

Dan Kenney, DeKalb

Amy Sandberg, Rockford

Verna Schubert, Rockton

Judy Wyatt, Loves Park

### **Anniversaries:**

20 Years:

Ginnie Watson, Rockford

15 Years:

Phil & Carolyn Fulkerson, Rockford

Nancy Jacobson, Rockford

5 Years:

Polly Doyle, Shirland

### *New Member Special!*

**Thanks to a generous donor, new members receive a Doug Tallamy book while supplies last! New members must pick up their copy of the book at a monthly meeting.**

## ILLINOIS NATIVE LANDSCAPING BILL

**Carrie Meyer**

A new bill in support of native landscapes, the Homeowners' Native Landscaping Act HB5256, has passed both the Illinois House and the Senate and will soon be on Governor Pritzker's desk. The Act stipulates that homeowners' associations "shall not prohibit any resident or owner from planting or

growing Illinois native species on the resident's or owner's lawn so long as the area is maintained predominantly free of weeds, invasive species, and trash, and vegetation does not extend over or onto neighboring properties, public or common sidewalks, pathways, streets or other public or common areas or elements, and does not interfere with traffic or utilities."

Introduced in early February by Laura Faver Dias, State Representative of District 62, the bill was originally known as the MONARCH Act (Mobilizing Our Neighborhoods to Adopt Resilient Conservation Habitats). It was amended to change the name to that mentioned above and to clarify that exotic or noxious weeds would not be protected under the act. Illinois native species include "trees, shrubs, vines, ferns,



flowers, forbs, sedges, grasses, and other plants growing in the State of Illinois before European settlement." Specifically excluded are any noxious weeds regulated by the Illinois Noxious Weed Law (such as Canada thistle, ragweed, musk thistle and others), or exotic species regulated under the

Illinois Exotic Weed Act (such as exotic honeysuckles, buckthorn, oriental bittersweet, multiflora rose and others). Native landscape is defined to mean an intentionally maintained area of Illinois native species. Further, the homeowners' association may "adopt reasonable rules and regulations governing a planned, intentional, and maintained native landscape that do not impair the native landscape's proper maintenance and care or impose height restrictions."

The bill was amended in late March, and passed both houses by mid-May. Once the Governor receives the bill, he will have 60 days to sign.

**Photos on pages 4 and 5 by Jessie Crow Mermel**





ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Cathy Johnson  
2205 S. Perryville Rd. PMB 191  
Rockford, IL, 61108

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## DON'T BECOME EXTINCT!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 06/01/2024, 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.



## 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

Our regular meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month. We are live streaming the programs over ZOOM and posting recordings on YouTube. Links to the meetings and programs are posted on our website and our Facebook page, and sent to members via email the week of the meeting. If you want to receive the link send an email to: [janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com).

## ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER BOARD AND COORDINATORS

### BOARD

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Carrie Meyer (301) 466.8754 [Cmeyer@gmu.edu](mailto:Cmeyer@gmu.edu)  
Gloria Powell [glrpowell610@yahoo.com](mailto:glrpowell610@yahoo.com)

### APPOINTED COORDINATORS

*Booth coordinator:* [open position]  
*Library coordinator:* Ginnie Watson  
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*Membership coordinator:* Sallie Krebs  
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Ginnie Watson (as above)  
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*Show Me/Help Me coordinator:*  
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*Social media coordinator:* Jessie Crow Mermel (as to the left)  
*Tree & shrub sale coordinator:* Brian Hale  
(815) 289.2384 [treeandshrubsale@gmail.com](mailto:treeandshrubsale@gmail.com)  
*Volunteer coordinator:* Cynthia Nelson (as to the left)  
*Website coordinator:* Janet Giesen (as to the left)  
*Youth education & grants coordinator:* Kim Lowman Vollmer (as to the left)