

Photo Courtesy of Rebecca Eyer

New Members

By Carol and Bob Niendorf,
WOFVA Membership Co-chairs

A "wild" welcome to these new members who joined our Chapter between May 1 and June 15:

- Monica Golden, Oshkosh
- Robert Kahl, Marquette, MI
- John Kieffer, Appleton
- Barbara Kuhn, Oshkosh
- Jessica Monro, Oshkosh
- Sarah Nau, Oshkosh
- Tom Ziebell, Oshkosh

We're so glad you joined Wild Ones!

Don't Become Extinct!

See your membership expiration date on your newsletter label and follow directions for renewing.

Thanks, and we'll look forward to seeing you at the meetings!

— Bob Niendorf &
Carol Niendorf,
Membership Co-chairs

WILD Center
Wild Ones National Headquarters
2285 Butte des Morts Beach Rd
Neenah, WI

Directions: From Hwy 41, take Exit 136, drive east on BB (Prospect Ave) to right on Northern Rd, then left onto Stroebe Rd. From Stroebe, turn right onto Butte des Morts Beach Rd.

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wildones.org

MEET AUTHOR HEATHER HOLM AT THE FOX CITIES BOOK FESTIVAL

By Donna VanBuecken, Wild Ones Fox Valley Area (WOFVA) Chapter Board Member

This year WOFVA Chapter has been invited to participate in the Eleventh Fox Cities Book Festival with an author that speaks for our mission. We have invited Heather Holm, author of *Bees: An Identification and Native Plant Forage Guide* and *Pollinators of Native Plants*, and a member of the Wild Ones Prairie Edge Chapter in Minnesota. Co-sponsoring Heather with us will be Outagamie County Master Gardeners Association (OCMGA) and Paper Valley Garden Club (PVGCC), our partners in the Spring Plant Sale Trail.

Heather will be speaking on October 8 from 6:30 – 7:30 pm at the Menasha Public Library, 440 1st Street, Menasha, WI 54952 and on October 9 from 10:00 – 11:00 am at the WILD Center, 2285 Butte des Morts Beach Road, Neenah, WI 54956.

Put this opportunity to hear Heather talk about her research and her love of pollinators on your calendar and plan to attend one of her presentations.

The **Book Festival** runs from **October 8 thru 14**. To learn more about the other authors who will be here for the Book Festival, go to <http://foxcitiesbookfestival.org>. Heather's website is <https://www.pollinatorsnativeplants.com>.



Heather Holm, Author



Events – Summer 2018 of Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter

Appleton Memorial Park Gardens Savanna Tour

Aug 23 | Thr | 5:30 pm | Appleton Memorial Park Gardens | 1313 Wiczke Blvd, Appleton, WI

Walk with **Dick Nikolai**, retired Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Biologist and volunteer, and **Jim Kinderman**, Appleton Parks Department. Learn about the prairie savanna site within this public park. We will be guided to the initial planting area created in 2001, identify native species, visit new developments, and witness how the area has grown and changed over time. Hear about plans for increasing the native diversity at this choice community location.

Program Cancelled: The September program was cancelled due to a change in the speaker's availability. Read about Dr. Laura Hartman's presentation on page 6.

Partnership with Winnebago Audubon Society, Birdscaping in the Midwest

Nov 15 | Thr | 6:30 pm Social | 7 pm Program | Evergreen Retirement Community | 1130 N Westfield St, Oshkosh, WI

Mariette Nowak, author of *Birdscaping in the Midwest* and former director of the Wehr Nature Center in Milwaukee County, will give a presentation on attracting birds to your home landscape. Creating a native plant environment in your yard can offer a year-long smorgasbord of berries, nuts, seeds and insects while providing habitat for birds, butterflies, bees, and bats.

23rd Annual Toward Harmony with Nature Conference

Jan 26 | Sat | 8 am-4:15 pm

Watch for information in the fall edition of the WOFVA Chapter newsletter and on the conference website: TowardHarmonywithNature.org.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Barb Cattani, WOFVA President

What's the Deal with Native Plants?

Why do we garden with native plants? We know they're good for native pollinators and birds. They have deep root systems (especially compared to turf grass) that improve soil quality. A rain garden of native plants slows or prevents water run-off and reduces contaminants in streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans. They give the landscape a more natural look. Diversity is a good thing, and plantings with native plants tend to be more diverse. These are the plants that grew here before humans developed the land. Native plants require less maintenance. There are lots of ways to measure the benefits of our landscapes.



But why does that appeal to you?

That's a question the WOFVA Chapter Board has been asking a lot as part of our strategic planning work. We're asking ourselves what our Chapter can do to give you more from your membership. Our ideas and plans are as diverse as our gardens. We know that not everyone who gardens with native plants belongs to Wild Ones and, we know that not all Wild Ones members garden the same way or for the same reason. So, what do we have in common? This was discussed in part at our May program meeting with Dr. Laura Hartman. The honest discussion and differing points of view were thought-provoking.

How do you measure the benefits of your landscaping or gardening work? What is your reward? And how do native plants help you achieve that? Please take some time as you are enjoying your plants, the butterflies, the birds, or whatever it is that gives you pleasure in your environment, to think about how we can landscape the future together.

WOFVA PARTNERS WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

By Donna VanBuecken, WOFVA Board Member

WOFVA again partnered with PVGC on their Habitat for Humanity native plant project. PVGC selected these plants for the new gardens:

- Spring blooms – spiderwort (*Tradescantia Ohiensis*)
- Summer blooms - black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
- Fall blooms - three sky blue aster (*Aster azureus*)

The goal was to encourage new homeowners to choose some native plants for their landscapes. During the past two years, WOFVA has matched their plant choices, so their project could reach two families, each receiving nine plants.

Beginning with 2019, WOFVA will be taking on this project with Habitat for Humanity, providing both forbs and grasses to new homeowners in order to encourage them to use native plants in their landscapes. Lucy Valitchka has offered to be the coordinator for this WOFVA project. If you'd like to be part of this project as well, please contact WOFVA at 920-572-9540 or FoxValleyAreaChapter@gmail.com.



(L to R) Jessica Fleek of Habitat for Humanity is shown with one of the new home owners, Alicia. Alicia has two children and is a single mother. She has a great yard and is really looking forward to planting the native plants.

Photo courtesy of Lucy Valitchka

NATURAL LANDSCAPES FOR TOMORROW GRANT PROGRAM

By Peggy McGaffey, Natural Landscapes for Tomorrow Grant Program Chair and WOFVA Vice President

Okay. Summer is winding down. Time to move on and plan for future native planting and educational opportunities. If you're a school, nature area, house of worship, or other public and not for profit organization, WOFVA Chapter might be able to help. We have a grant program, Natural Landscapes for Tomorrow, that can provide funds for creative projects involving developing natural landscapes and outdoor classrooms using native plants.

Grants range from \$100-\$500. Applicants must be within 15 miles of Winnebago, Calumet, Outagamie or Fond du Lac Counties, and must fund equal to 50% of the project's cost. Proposed projects must emphasize youth involvement and increase the educational value of a publicly accessible site, using native plants. To get the most benefit from the grant funds, it is strongly encouraged, but not required, that the plants be acquired through the Chapter's annual native plant sale which occurs in May.

More information and an **application form** can be obtained at our website <http://foxvalleyarea.wildones.org/resources>. Applications are **due by February 1, 2019**. We look forward to learning about your creative projects.

HEY BE CAREFUL OUT THERE!

By Joy Perry, Member

Many pesticides can pose human health hazards and/or harm to wildlife, pollinators or other species and general environmental health. So, good advice is to eliminate or reduce toxic pesticides in our yards and landscapes.

Well, great . . . but what do we do about the pests that continue to eat, out-compete, or otherwise harm our gardens and native plant communities?

Here is a hierarchy of options to consider:

- 1. Avoid pesticide use** by adjusting the mix of species you grow, or where you grow them. Not always possible, but if you know you have a healthy quackgrass (*Elymus repens*) monoculture where you'd like to develop a pollinator garden, recognize that it will take much time and effort to eliminate the hideous quackgrass without herbicide applications. You might just want to put that pollinator garden somewhere else.
- 2. Battle the pests physically.** For example, knock Japanese beetles off plants and into a bucket of soapy water where they will drown instead of spraying with insecticides that kill insects on contact or when they eat sprayed foliage. And beware: a spray toxic to insect pests will almost certainly be poisonous to pollinators and other beneficial insects and animals too. Similarly, if you have the time and people-power, pull small weed seedlings, or dig them out before they're too large to manage. Smother them with layers of cardboard or old carpet for a couple years if you're preparing a new planting area. Invest in fencing to keep browsing animals away. Timely mowing or fire can also be appropriate in some situations.
- 3. Use less-toxic pesticide options.** Insecticidal soap sprays will control soft-bodied insects and their eggs. These rely on direct contact and have no residual effect requiring frequent reapplication. Commercial "Bt" sprays use bacteria that kill insects: there are products effective against caterpillars (Bt-k), mosquito/blackfly/fungus gnat larvae (Bt-i), larvae of some beetles (Bt-sd and Bt-t). These products may also be toxic to insect pests, pollinators and other beneficial insects and animals.

Some warm-blooded pests (deer, I'm looking at you) can be deterred by commercial or homemade concoctions based on putrifying eggs, bloodmeal, or other bad-smelling ingredients.

Some home remedies and a few commercial products employ vinegar (acetic acid) to kill the top growth of weeds (this does acidify soil, but the effect should be temporary with normal rainfall.)
- 4. Apply commercial herbicides safely and minimally** as a last resort, especially for invasive weeds and trees. Research the best time of year to treat your target species, and the best product to use with the least amount. In general, that will mean a direct application of herbicide to the plant, rather than a broadcast spray of the area. And protect yourself – wear plastic gloves, long pants and sleeves.

Disclaimer: *It's illegal to apply a substance as a pesticide if it hasn't been registered with the Environmental Protection Agency. So I can't recommend any homemade concoctions. However, as an interesting aside, I will report on remedies that others claim have been used successfully in some circumstances.*



Joy Perry

Insecticidal soap spray for soft-bodied insects (caterpillars, aphids, whiteflies) from *Horticulture* magazine.

1. Choose a clean spray bottle or sprayer for your mixture.
2. Mix 1 tablespoon of soap per quart of water, or 4 to 5 tablespoons of soap per gallon of water. ("Soap" is not "detergent". Dish detergent does not work in the same way or as well. Use a pure castile liquid soap without fragrances or additives.)
3. Mix together thoroughly and use immediately. Make sure to evenly coat infected plants, from top to bottom, for best results. It must come in contact with the insects for it to work.

Vinegar for weed control (from goodhousekeeping.com). Vinegar is a dilute acid solution that kills many plants on contact. A spray of household vinegar, 5% acetic acid, kills many very young weeds. Larger/older weeds may be damaged but probably not killed. At that point, you may be tempted to buy some "horticultural vinegar," 20% acetic acid. This is a dangerous product, though, that can burn skin and dangerously irritate lungs and eyes as well as corrode metals. It will also kill non-target species like toads, snakes and other animals. If you choose to use this acid, wear goggles and protective clothing.

Deer repellent spray from *Backyard Living* magazine. This formula mimics some commercial products and is based on the obvious repellent properties of rotten eggs. Worth a try, though it will have to be reapplied after rainfall. Ingredients: 1 egg, ½ c milk, 1 T cooking oil, 1 T dishwashing detergent, 1 gallon water. Method: Beat egg and milk together, then add oil and detergent; add mixture to water and stir to mix well. Store in a covered gallon container. Apply to plants with a spray bottle. Reapply every two weeks or after rain.

Author's Profile: *Joy Perry, native plant enthusiast and Chair of the WOFVA Speakers Bureau, is a retired biologist. For twenty years she taught environmental science, ecology, botany and general biology at the University of Wisconsin - Fox Valley. She earned a Bachelor of Science in general biology from Purdue University in 1974 and a MS in Plant Pathology and Integrated Pest Management from UW - Madison in 1978.*



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November 1, 1994:
Fox Valley Area became chartered as a Wild Ones chapter

Wild Ones 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.

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IN-HOME MONARCH REARING

By Mike Boguar

The monarch butterfly has become the poster-child for restoration efforts, get-back-to-nature events, environmental activism, and everything in-between. The milkweed (*Asclepias spp.*) is the host plant for the monarch butterflies' larvae. The idea is, more milkweed, more monarchs. More monarchs, strong population. Strong population, species health. But few people take the extra step and they're missing out on the best part of this wonderful species, in-home rearing.

Turning over a leaf or two can reveal a small milky white dot. While searching for the dots, you will discover other fantastic interactions right outside your door. The dot is an egg that may be brought indoors, so that the whole reason we plant milkweed can be brought full circle.

Late August into September is the fourth, and possibly the most important, generation of the monarch butterfly. These are the ones that fly to Mexico, overwinter, and restart the population next year. We can rear these fragile insects right in our homes. Once you observe them hatching from the egg, munching leaves for weeks, forming their chrysalis, and eventually emerging fully transformed, you will have a new appreciation for milkweed.

Eggs

One of the best indicators that an egg is present is a visiting butterfly, not nectaring, but flapping its wings rapidly only to land for a brief second and then fly off. That behavior will reveal something under the leaf it just visited – she laid a single egg. Snap the leaf off near the stem and bring it indoors. Place a damp, not wet, paper towel at the bottom of a plastic container or jar for an observation container. Place the leaf in egg-side-up and wait 3-4 days. It will turn black (the eyes of the baby caterpillar through the translucent egg) and then it will hatch. It will be 1-2mm! And after it eats its eggshell, it will begin munching tiny holes in the milkweed leaf.

Larvae

For the next 10-14 days that little caterpillar will munch AND munch. It will grow over 10 times its size at birth, devouring leaf after leaf after leaf. The caterpillar will outgrow its own skin five times, shedding the old and growing into a new stage, each called an instar. New leaves should be added every couple of days and the container must be emptied of debris. The caterpillar may be gently pulled off and placed on a fresh leaf. A little resistance is normal, as it will attach

itself with silk. If it moves to a part of the container and stops moving, sometimes for days, don't worry – it's probably shedding its skin and will be back to munching in no time.

Chrysalis

After 10-14 days of gorging itself, it will begin wandering in search of a place to attach itself before undergoing metamorphosis to form its chrysalis. Once it finds a suitable spot, it will spin a small silk pad and hang upside down in the shape of a 'J' for about 36 hours before straightening out. Its striped skin will be shed to reveal a lime green dermis that will harden over a few hours to form its iconic green chrysalis. Here it will hang for another 10-14 days before revealing its adult colors through the chrysalis skin.

Butterfly

The chrysalis will turn from green to "monarch-colored," then the butterfly will crack the hardened skin and hang on to the empty chrysalis to dry its wings. Some crucial things happen in this emergence. The first is that it must literally zip up the two-pieced proboscis, that straw-like structure that unfolds when it takes nectar from flowers. The second is that it must pump fluid from its thorax throughout its wings and then dry them for flight.

After a few hours, gently coax the new butterfly onto your finger, and place it outside on your favorite native flower. It will find its preferred nectar source. And just like that, you've fostered a monarch that will be heading to Mexico for the winter. You had a helping hand in restoring the population of this magnificent species.



Instar on Milkweed

Photo courtesy of Sandra Otremba



Butterfly Ready for Release

Photo courtesy of Sandra Otremba

Author's Profile: Mike Boguar graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee with an undergraduate degree in Conservation & Environmental Science and minors in Geography and Biology. He holds a Master of Science in Management from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. He operates an ecological restoration firm, writing management plans, inventorying native species, and removing invasive species.

2018 TOWARD HARMONY WITH NATURE (THWN) KEYNOTE PRESENTATION DVD AVAILABLE

By Donna VanBuecken, THWN Conference Committee Member

We now have copies of Neil Diboll's keynote presentation from the 2018 THWN Conference available. Because Neil's presentation was "a call for advocacy," Wisconsin Public Television will not be able to broadcast it on University Place as some of our keynote presentations have been in the past.

Contact **920-572-9540** or **FoxValleyAreaChapter@gmail.com** to make arrangements to pick up your copy of Neil's presentation. Cost is \$15 each. If you want the DVD shipped, add \$5.

Other keynote presentations we have filmed include Doug Tallamy's "The Vital New Role of the Suburban/Urban Garden" in two parts*, and Darrel Morrison's "Rivers and Drifts: Natural Processes and Patterns in Designed Places." Please make use of the same contact information to find out about purchasing copies of them.

A NATIVE WATER PLANT: DUCK POTATO (*Sagittaria latifolia*)

By Lawanda Jungwirth, Wild Ones member & journalist

Duck potato (*Sagittaria latifolia*) is a native aquatic species found in Wisconsin, and in fact, throughout the United States except for Nevada and Alaska. Throughout its range, it is called by many names including the following: arrowleaf, broadleaf arrowhead, duck potato, Indian potato, Katniss, swan potato, swamp potato, tule-potato, wapato, wapadoo, and wapati. I will refer to it here as duck potato, since that is our local norm.



Photo Courtesy of the United States Department of Agriculture

Duck potato grows in sunny spots in shallow standing water of marshes, ditches, lakes, sloughs, ponds, bogs, rivers and streams. There is conflicting research as to what it prefers for water level. One source states that duck potato does especially well in areas where water levels fluctuate throughout the year, while another source insists that water levels should remain constant. Perhaps it does equally well no matter whether water levels change or not. In perfect conditions, huge colonies can form, making a ribbon-like band following the banks of a stream, river or lake. It is an emergent plant, meaning that it is rooted in the lake, river or pond bottom, but its stems and leaves extend above water.

Leaves are large and unmistakably arrow-shaped. *Sagittaria* means “arrow.” *Latifolia* is derived from two Latin words, *latus*, meaning “broad” or “wide” and *folius*, meaning “leaved.”

Duck potato stands from 1 to 5 feet tall. Leaves vary in size from 4 to 12 inches long and 2 to 6 inches wide. The sturdy flower stalk is separate from the leaves, but just as tall. Each stalk produces 2 to 15 whorls of pretty white, 3-petaled flowers about an inch across. Flower centers are green or yellow. Sepals are ovate, and bend backward by fruiting time. In late summer, the flowers develop into round clusters of seeds - up to 20,000 viable seeds per plant! Seeds are winged achenes 2 to 4 mm long, with a beak projecting an additional 1 to 2 mm. Near the end of summer, the leaves and flower stalk begin to die back and all the nutrition they've stored goes down into the rhizomes and the tubers that grow at the ends of them.

Tubers grow like numbers on a clock around the main stem of the plant. The tubers are found at the end of rhizomes up to three feet away from the plant and from 6 to 16 inches deep in the muck. Tubers range from acorn-sized to golf-ball sized. Colors are white, pink or purplish, once the muck is washed off.

Strangely, given that one of the names for *S. latifolia* is “duck potato,” it is very difficult for



Photo courtesy of Ron Jungwirth

ducks to actually eat the tubers. They are simply buried too deeply in the muck for ducks to reach. Canada geese, being larger, are able to dig in the muck to unearth the tubers and actually swallow them whole. Though mallards and other shallow water ducks are unable to access the tubers, they do eat the emergent shoots in spring and the seeds in fall. Seeds are also eaten by other waterfowl, songbirds and wading birds. The foliage provides cover for fish and aquatic insects. In the animal kingdom, beavers, porcupines and muskrats eat the entire duck potato plant.

Along with the wildlife benefit, duck potato improves water quality by removing excess nitrogen and phosphorus. It is also able to tolerate and assimilate heavy metals.

Duck potato can be propagated in several ways. Tubers are planted in spring by pushing them into the muck about 2 to 3 inches in areas where water is from 6 to 12 inches deep. They are buoyant, so be sure they are secure or they will float to the surface. Here is what the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends for spacing: “Site quality will dictate plant spacing. Under ideal site conditions plants can be spread up to 6 feet apart and still attain stand closure within one growing season. On degraded or critical sites it is advisable to reduce plant spacing to 1 to 2 feet.”

It can also be propagated by seed. Again from the USDA: “The achenes are easily harvested, cleaned, and broadcast sown. Prior to spring sowing, the seeds need a three-month moist stratification treatment. Sow onto well worked, saturated soils. Germination occurs under direct sunlight with temperatures ranging from 80° to 90°.”

You may also find duck potato available bare root or potted. When planting either of those, ensure that the leaves are not submerged at planting time.

No fertilizer or added nutrition is necessary for duck potato to thrive. The only requirement is a saturated soil.

There are six species of *Sagittaria* found around the Great Lakes and Upper Midwest:

- Midwestern arrowhead (*S. brevirostra*)
- Mississippi or long-lobed arrowhead (*S. calycina*)
- Northern arrowhead or arum-leaved arrowhead (*S. cuneate*)
- Grass-leaved arrowhead (*S. graminea*)
- Common arrowhead (*S. latifolia*)
- Sessile-fruited arrowhead (*S. rigida*)

Author Profile: Lawanda Jungwirth is a Wild Ones member, has been a Master Gardener since 1994 completing the required continuing education hours as required for re-certification every year. She has written a garden column in *The Oshkosh Northwestern* since 2000 and the “Plant Matters” column in *Badger Sportsman* magazine since 2010. She is a life-long gardener, has an intense interest in environmental issues, and has become interested in identifying aquatic native and invasive species in the Fox River since moving to a home on the river in 2015. In addition, she is the recipient of the 2010 Wisconsin Invasive Species Council Invader Crusader Award.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Secretary

Responsibilities: Attend and document monthly Board meetings, maintain and monitor implementation of By-laws, notify members of all regular and Board meetings, document Chapter Annual meeting.

Newsletter Editor

Responsibilities: Solicit articles with associated photos for quarterly Chapter newsletter, edit and submit copy to selected members for editing, send final draft with photos to layout designer, coordinate printing and mailing of newsletter, monitor complimentary mailing lists and costs associated with newsletter. Current newsletter editor will assist in transition to new editor.

TOWARD HARMONY WITH NATURE CONFERENCE

Conference Site Coordinator

Responsibilities: Work with conference center representative to determine site facility arrangements, attend conference planning meetings with other committee members twice a year in addition to attending the conference. Current Site coordinators will assist in training the new Conference Site Coordinator.

TOWARD HARMONY WITH NATURE CONFERENCE

Vendor & Exhibits Chair

Responsibilities: Recruit vendors and exhibitors for the conference, assist vendors as needed the day of the conference, attend conference planning meetings with other committee members twice a year in addition to attending the conference. Current Vendor & Exhibitors Chair will assist in the transition to a new Chair.

AN ETHIC OF RESTORATION IN THE FOX RIVER WATERSHED

By Donna VanBuecken, WOFVA Chapter Board Member

Laura Hartman, PhD, presented her preliminary findings of her study, "An Ethic of Restoration in the Fox River Watershed" to WOFVA members on May 24. She's attempting to answer these questions which also relate to Wild Ones and their goals toward native landscaping:

- a) What counts as "natural" when we restore an ecosystem?
- b) How do categories like "native" and "invasive" relate to the discourse of "purity" and "pollution?"
- c) What is the value of nature and how does human intervention diminish or enhance that value?

Laura started her presentation with the statement "Wild Ones are Prairie People," and I think almost everyone's eyes rolled. We all knew that Wild Ones is more than just "Wild Ones are Prairie People." As she went through her findings and conclusions, such as "prairie brings us joy and beauty" and "humans can be a force for good by planting a prairie," attendees opened the discussion to more all-encompassing environmental questions. Like, what about small yards? Urban yards? Stopover habitats? Gardeners vs conservationists? What about developing a prairie where prairie wasn't originally? What about wetland and woodland enthusiasts?

And then came her discussion on the philosophy concerns. How do we really know what was native? Why is allowing plants from other continents to naturalize bad? Are we restoring or creating an ecosystem? These questions brought a lot more divided opinions. Philosophy is never easy.

A few days after Laura's presentation, I sent her an e-mail asking if the title of her presentation could instead have been "Wild Ones are Prairie People, but they are not just prairie people."

This was her response:

"You are correct that I did not intend to convey that the Wild Ones are only prairie people. I was simply struck by the way that prairie restoration, and prairie plants seem emblematic of the work that the Wild Ones I interviewed are undertaking. My work is in philosophy and religion, so I'm always looking for a good symbol or metaphor, and it struck me that the prairie was a good symbol for the type of work the Wild Ones are doing — a very hands-on, participatory, aesthetically pleasing, and quick-to-mature ecosystem. And it also relates to the fact that the Wild Ones began in the Midwest, prairie country, more or less. Scholars I've read have maintained that ecological restoration and native plantings are popular in this region because the prairie is so appealing. It's a unique feature of this region, something to be celebrated.

You are not the only one who questioned the formulation 'Wild Ones are Prairie People,' so I gather I'm a little off on that. Sorry! And thanks for your feedback. When I move toward publishing on this topic I will definitely temper this statement. I gather you don't want to exclude the woodland or wetland people, and I definitely honor that wish."

Laura M. Hartman is assistant professor of environmental studies at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia. Her background in religious and philosophical environmental ethics informs her work on interfaith environmentalism, ethics of climate engineering, Christianity and consumption. She is also a Wild Ones member.

Author's Note: Just as a refresher, go to *Wild Ones Journal* MarApr2015 and read the front page article entitled "Where the Prairies used to be." <http://www.wildones.org/download/Journal/2015Vol28No2%20Journal.pdf>

WELL-BEHAVED NATIVE PLANTS FOR A MORE TIDY GARDEN

By Justin Kroening, Owner Stone Silo Prairie Gardens, 2325 Oak Ridge Circle, DePere WI. 54115

Taking the wild into the landscape can be a wonderful gardening experience, or a maintenance nightmare. This is not selective to native plant material, we often find this in plant material sourced outside of one's region. The difference is the non-natives can become more than just weeds in our garden, they become invasive species. There are some things you can think about when you design your tidy native garden. Consider the plant's native environment and habitat, and the level of maintenance you are willing to do. The list of well-behaved natives is much longer than one would assume.

While designing your native garden consider the growing conditions. Some plants placed in conditions different from their native environment will take on a different growth habit. For instance, anemone (*Anemone spp.*) often found in the shade, forms nice clusters and doesn't spread in a carpet form, but in full sun, watch out. In its natural environment, cup plant (*Silphium perfoliatum*) has competition from many prairie grasses and other strong full sun forbs and will form colonies. If you plant it in a landscape bed with low competition and little maintenance, it will take over. Bee balm (*Monarda fistulosa*), for example, will do the same thing in your garden as it does along the road sides. Like all natives, these can have a place. By looking at how plants grow in nature, a gardener can learn how they may act in their own landscape.

In designing a smaller native garden, consider the amount of maintenance you are willing to do. Almost any native can be controlled by deadheading and digging up excess plants. I often find mass plantings of individual species easier to maintain. With mass plantings any other plant that joins the crowd should be moved. Remember, a weed is nothing more than an unwanted plant. If hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) jumps in with blazing star (*Liatris spp.*) and it's unwanted there, it is a weed. Transplant it to another location, or give it to a friend. Plant material decisions become more obvious when considering the amount of maintenance you are willing to do. Shrubs in the right locations are great low maintenance plants. In this article I will focus on herbaceous material.



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Eyer

Consider a well-behaved milkweed (*Asclepias spp.*), like orange milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*). Most of us think of the fairly aggressive common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), but orange milkweed, often called butterfly weed, can be very well-behaved. *Asclepias tuberosa* is a great stout, long blooming, and very attractive native perennial. This show stopper emerges from the ground late but makes a quick appearance once up. Its lovely striking orange blossoms attract all sorts of pollinators. The milkweed family is also a food source for the larvae stage of the Monarch butterfly. It's a long-lived perennial that makes a great landscape plant, but may take a few years to mature.

Blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*) is a shrub-like perennial that blooms in the spring. Other baptisias come in various colors and forms. Some of them can become quite large over time. They are easy to control by removing the seed heads in fall or by digging their babies. During the winter, the seed heads are great hotels for dormant insects, which are bird food!



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Eyer

Blue false indigo will emerge in spring looking similar to asparagus. Then it forms a nice shrub-like plant that has a bean or pea-type leaf. Since they are legumes, the plants improve the soil and have a very large root system. Plants bloom for a few weeks, then remain as a nice texture plant throughout the season and into the winter, with seed heads forming in June.



Photo courtesy of Joan Rudolph

Short compact plants are often nice for borders or along walkways. Prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*) is a well-behaved option, blooming in the spring with a flower that resembles smoke. The foliage often remains evergreen throughout the winter, carrying a feathery texture. Prairie smoke spreads slowly out from its base.

Clump forming grasses serve many functions in the garden. They create habitat for wildlife and provide food sources. Their strong roots compete in the soil with weeds, offer erosion control, and wonderful seasonal interest. Some grasses grow from rhizomes; these aren't recommended in small areas. A rhizome is one continuous root, and grasses like sweet grass (*Hierochloa odorata*) will proliferate. Turf grass is a good example of a plant that spreads by rhizome. Clump forming grasses such as little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) are much more well-behaved. They will spread by seed but are easy to dig when young or can be let go to fill in. Little Blue is a great landscape plant in masses or small clusters, with an absolutely striking fall color.

In the shade many of our spring ephemerals spread readily but go dormant for much of the season. Plants like Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) compete very little with later emerging plants. Blue bottle gentian (*Gentian andrewsii*), if planted in its desired location, may spread by seed, but will be welcomed.



Photo courtesy of Joan Rudolph

In conclusion, property owners don't need acres of land to grow native plants for wildlife habitat. Many beneficial native plants can be used in the typical city lot. Once established, native plantings can function very well in the landscape. Allow desired plants to form dense colonies, in turn keeping out unwanted plants. Sedges such as Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*) can form a natural green mulch, reducing the need to purchase mulch. A native plant in the right place won't require watering once established. Even in the dog days of summer they will maintain their beauty without irrigation.

Native plants are adapted to most garden pests and can withstand some damage, eliminating the need for pesticides. Also, chewed leaves of plants are a sign of a healthy garden that is supporting insect life, aka bird food. Check with your local nurseries to see if they sell plants native to your area. If they don't, encourage them to do so. Stone Silo Prairie Gardens is located in Ledgeview, Wisconsin. Stop and see our wide variety of native plants.

Author's Profile: Justin Kroening is owner of Stone Silo Prairie Gardens and holds a horticulture degree from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College.



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WOFVA 18th ANNUAL PLANT SALE WRAP-UP

By Donna VanBuecken, WOFVA Plant Sale Coordinator

WOFVA 2018 Plant Sale was a huge success thanks to our three new supervisors, Pat and Dick Filzen and Everett Grosskopf, and all of the volunteers. This was the first year in a long time that we have included the trees and shrubs sale with the native plant plugs sale. And, almost everything went off without a hitch and the few hiccups, were handled quickly.

The concept of partnering with the OCMGA and PVGC has definitely increased the number of visitors on the day of the pick-up and sale and has given us an additional opportunity to make others aware of the benefits to the environment of using native plants.

The plant sale and the conference are our two major fundraisers, so we appreciate everyone's efforts in making this a great success!

Special thanks to the volunteers that helped make the sale a success!

Margaret Alexander, Don Brill, Mike Brandel, Janet Carlson, Barb Cattani, Sharon Duerkop, Dave Edwards, Dick Filzen, Pat Filzen, Pat Fischer, Rich Fischer, Jamie Fuerst, Zaiga Freivalds, Doug Grant, Everett Grosskopf, Kathleen Hallett, Steve Hazell, Kathleen Isaacson, Carol Hernke, John Kiefer, Kristin Kauth, Cathy Larsen, Stephanie Marcelle, Tim McKeag, David Misterek, Sue Mings, Bob Niendorf, Carol Niendorf, Dave Peck, Sue Peck, Joy Perry, Lori Poehls, Laura Ramseier, Frank Raith, Cheryl Root, Karen Syverson, Lucy Valitchka, Donna VanBuecken, Dave Wherry and Rory Williams.

Wanted: Co-Supervisor, Trees and Shrub Sale

We are looking for a co-supervisor for the trees and shrubs sale. Everett Grosskopf would like someone to work with him in setting up the sorting of the orders. If you're interested in taking on this once a year task, please contact the Plant Sale Coordinator at 920-730-8436.



Photo courtesy of Donna VanBuecken

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