



Twin Cities Chapter

Quarterly Newsletter

November 2010 Volume 8, Issue 4

Upcoming Events/Monthly Meetings



2011 Theme: Building Tomorrow's Heritage

This year's theme fuses Aldo Leopold's vision of community to include soil, water, plants and wildlife with the current movement toward natural landscape management. Leopold, best known for his book, *A Sand County Almanac*, was an ecological activist who inspired people to treat the land with love and respect.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!! Spring 2011 Design with Nature Conference will be held Saturday, February 26th, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at the University of Minnesota Conference Center, Saint Paul, Minnesota. Speakers:

- Rick Darke, a noted author and landscape designer, will talk about landscape management.
- Lynn Steiner, Midwest author, will apply her extensive knowledge of native plants and plant communities to landscape design principles.
- Stan Temple, a senior fellow from the Aldo Leopold Foundation, will introduce Aldo Leopold's land ethics and principles.
- Paula Westmoreland, a landscape designer and author will present a picture of the impact geological history and ecology have on our current landscapes and water resources.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

(Meetings held the third Tuesday of the month at the Wood Lake Nature Center: social at 6:30, meeting to start promptly at 7:00. Free and open to the public)

Tuesday, November 16, 2010. Annual Membership Meeting, Potluck, Seed Exchange and Officer Election. + Seed Starting Basics. Celebrate our local Wild ones community by sharing food and native seeds and participating in election of our new officers for 2011. Please bring a dish to share. If this is not possible, of course the sharing of your company is quite sufficient. If you have seeds to share, please label them. We'll provide envelopes so participants can help themselves. We'll wrap up the evening with a presentation on seed starting by Nancy Schumacher, the Vagary.

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Tuesday, January 18, 2011. Managing the Landscape for Beneficial Insects, What IPM Can Teach Us. (Vera Krischik) Managing our landscapes without using conventional chemicals can reward us with a healthy environment where beneficial insects thrive and in turn control pests and pollinate our gardens. Dr. Krischik will discuss the monitoring and management techniques of integrated pest management (IPM).

Vera Krischik is an Associate Professor in the Dept. of Entomology at the U of M. Learn more about Dr. Krischik's research and her lab, the Center for Urban Ecology and Sustainability (CUES) at: www.entomology.umn.edu/cues/krischiklab

Presidents' Message - Marty Rice/Marilyn Jones, CoChairs

Time to stash those trowels, shovels, garden gloves away and thankfully the mosquito repellent too if that's one of your garden 'tools'. So what to write about now? How about what helps make a non-profit, educational and environmental advocacy group thrive? "Volunteers" certainly have an impact so it seems appropriate that we interview one of our most dedicated and passionate volunteers who has been a WO member for over 9 years and that would be Vicki Bonk who was the mastermind behind the NN (Nokomis Naturescape) on the northeast side of Lake Nokomis. Planning for the 4 acre site began in 1996; installation began 3 years later. This September it was especially dazzling just in time for the Monarch Watch. Her story follows:

What drew you to native landscaping?

I was pre-conditioned by my 1950/60 childhood experiences of a marsh in my neighborhood. I was captivated by the lively variety of plants and animals within the seasonally changing landscape. There always seemed to be something new to discover. In the early 1970's, the marsh was destroyed and turned into a mostly unused baseball field with compacted turf grass. The life disappeared and I didn't know how to help bring it back.

What inspired you to start the NN?

I returned to city life after living in the country for 8 years. Walking around Lake Nokomis revealed little in the landscape between turf grass and trees. The Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program came to our neighborhood and residents had an opportunity to initiate and choose programs backed with funding. I put forward the idea of a butterfly garden at Lake Nokomis. Environmental Services staff at the Park Board were very interested in native plant landscaping projects that had the support of area residents. I was immediately enthralled and propelled to advocate native plant species. This has been a wonderful learning trip about native plant communities and the essential role they play in sustainable living.

Sources of volunteers?

Wild Ones members are among the many volunteers who have played a key gardening and support role through the years. The Twin Cities Audubon chapter is now beginning to be involved. Park patrons see us gardening and also join in.



Vicki Bonk at the Minneapolis Monarch Festival

What are some of your favorite plants at NN?

I love the seasonally dynamic nature of a native plant garden. In the spring, the Prairie Smoke is among the first to bloom and the Virginia Bluebells blanket the ground beneath the trees. In mid-late summer, I especially enjoy the milkweed and liatris species with their vital connection to the monarch butterfly as sole host plant and as a nectar plant supreme. The NN is a certified Monarch Waystation. Gardeners and park patrons watch for the caterpillar and butterfly activity!

In the fall, the grasses are in full glory and a variety of asters and goldenrods give colorful fuel to the migrating monarchs and other important insects. The native grasses, shrubs and seed heads of plants such as coneflowers, lend texture to the winter landscape and give food to birds. I have many favorites!

What do you find most rewarding about NN?

The mission of NN is to “Encourage people to connect with nature by growing native plant gardens”. Seeing this happen, meeting the people who work towards this goal and just being outside in a native plantscape is immensely gratifying. This year over 5000 people happily attended the 2nd annual Minneapolis Monarch Festival –an event that unites environmental science, the arts and cultures and was held at the NN – a program with the monarch butterfly acting as an ambassador for native plant gardening.

Importantly, the stewardship of Naturescape volunteers through the years made our native planting a worthy demonstration garden and site for the Monarch Festival. Among the Wild Ones who were especially helpful were Kris Martinka (a tireless gardener) and Julia Vanatta, who led a series of NN tours.

Witnessing the lively beauty of the NN being appreciated by park patrons gives me hope that the earth has promise of being restored and protected for the future. People need to experience the wonder of nature to value it. Over the past 15 years, we know native plant gardening is growing in our neighborhood and around the country through efforts such as the NN and Wild Ones.

On a personal note, my work at the Naturescape has had the continual support of husband Richard and son Liam. They are perpetual garden volunteers and we share an enthusiasm for native plant communities that have brought us together at many wonderful places through the years. These journeys fostered an interest in environmental science, wild places and stewardship for Liam who is in his first year at a college strong in the field of natural resources.

How to sign up to volunteer at the NN: For more information or to volunteer, call the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association at 612/724-5652 or visit www.NokomisEast.org or www.MonarchFestival.org

Meeting Notes

September 2010, Gardening For Biodiversity, Michelle Kalantari. (Michelle works for Nature Conservancy. She hosted one of the WO summer tours this past year.) This presentation focused on her road to landscaping with natives and the resulting rewards. Within the past 5 years Michelle has renovated her garden by switching from a conventional landscape to one that is primarily native. She was inspired to go this route when she planted a Meadow Blazing Star in her yard and the butterflies arrived. In her opinion adult monarchs can't resist this plant.

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Convinced of the potential joys of visiting birds, butterflies and other insects, she began by hiring a landscape designer with experience in native plants to help her determine the best plan for the yard. She started slowly taking 3 years to develop the total envisioned design. As she moved forward, to acclimate the neighbors to the changes she was planning, Michelle started with the back yard. Once this was in she invited folks in to see what she had done, getting them to better understand what she was about. A couple of principles in redoing the yard were to maximize the use of everything and to keep the costs as reasonable as possible. Removed sod was recycled by building a berm in the front yard, with a youth hired to do the hauling. A portion of a dead maple was preserved as a hardscape feature to attract wildlife by creating a 15 foot high snag through careful pruning. Woodchips from the maple were spread in the yard as mulch. By taking 3 years to finish her plan she was able to divide her plants and use them elsewhere. Logs and dried twigs have been left scattered throughout the yard as perfect perching places for tiny critters.



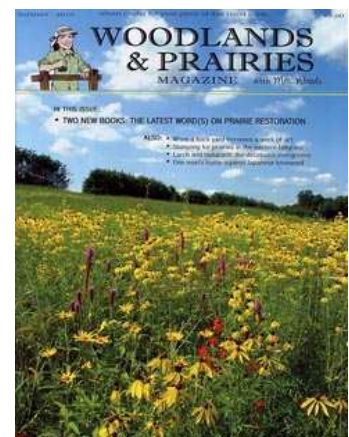
White Plume Moth Photo by Michelle

And the results... She now has over 120 species of plants in her yard. She has discovered that the wood chips she spread in her yard are teeming with life. Not only are there insects to be found, but also mushrooms, fungus and slime mold (a beneficial thing). Even with a typically sized urban yard that is surrounded primarily by sod covered neighboring yards (a veritable desert), insects still find their way to her yard. She had loads of photos showing the wide variety of visitors she has had to her garden. This is always an inspiration when one sees the unusual bugs that have stopped by and the great photos of the natives upon which they have landed.

And what has she learned... The most insect diversity is on her Golden Rods (stiff, showy and a cultivar, Fireworks). Don't rake up your leaves. They are great for naturally enriching the soil - another yard chore that can be crossed off the list! If insects are eating at plant leaves, try and resist doing something about it. A plant can take a 25% loss and not be harmed. If things are in balance you should not have a problem.

Books, Etc:

Marty Rice passed on a wonderful magazine for me to peruse - Woodlands & Prairies. This quarterly publication is beautiful to behold and loaded with interesting articles ranging from experiences in establishing native landscapes, mentoring, in depth look at a single species (this issue concentrated on the Catalpa), to art and insects. Coming out of Iowa it concentrates on plants and happenings in the upper Midwest. If the Spring 2010 issue that I read is any indication of their typical output, it looks like a magazine that would be a great addition to one's library. To get information on ordering the magazine as well as a look at their products, go to www.woodlandsandprairiesmagazine.com



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Right now is an ideal time to order this magazine as you can get two bonus issues with a 1 or 2 year subscription. There is also a bonus to Wild Ones in that 15% of the amount paid for subscription will be donated to our national organization. Check it out - a bargain for you and for the whole group!!



Strange pair at the last asters,
bumble bee and grasshopper, one
smoothed slick, one fuzzed, both
replete with chitin hooks. Both
hunger for life. We think
'Killing frost' means plants,
but as dendrites of ice rupture green,
so ice will end hopper and bee,
except for newborn buried queens
ripe with royal antifreeze, and a host
of hopper eggs that too will freeze
and yet in thaw emerge

Editor's note: Once again we have the pleasure of giving you something from the daily journal of John Caddy. If you wish to see more of his musings and great photos go to www.morning-earth.org

Gardener's To-Do List (November, December, January)

- * Fall is a busy time of year. Just a few chores done now will pay off in a tidy garden come next spring, and that means less work before you get in there and start digging in the dirt again.
- * Last call for weeding. Remove tough perennial weeds and you'll thank yourself in the spring. Throw away any seed heads, also any quack grass or bindweed (they continue to grow in your compost pile): the rest can be composted.
- * Cut back perennials if you find yellowed or frost damaged foliage too unattractive; though if they're not diseased you can leave them upright to help trap insulating snow and provide shelter and forage for wildlife.
- * Clean and organize your garden tools, including draining garden hoses and sprinklers.
- * Sketch your garden for winter-time planning for expanding your gardens. Try to find room for a rain garden.
- * Prairies may be cut or burned either now or in the spring.
- * Apply winter mulch as needed once the soil begins to freeze, or by late November. Most natives should do fine without this.
- * Add compost to newly planted perennials as you put your garden to bed for the winter.



The Brown Thumb

After what seemed to be an interminable number of rainy days, as I write this we are now into that time of year I have somewhat of a love/hate relationship with (as I am sure many of you do). For me there is nothing better than those crisp fall days with temperatures in the sixties, the muted reds and yellows popping up on trees and shrubs everywhere with an occasional blaze of deep red color. What I am not wild about, however, is the knowledge that my body will need to go through what seems like a long period of adjustment to the frigid weather that lies ahead. Although these fall days have been one glorious sunny day after another, as the morning temperatures hover in the high thirties and low forties I am trudging around in up to 4 layers of clothes on top just to maintain some sort of body warmth. In a few months the four layers

will suffice for temperatures below zero, but for now I struggle for warmth when I am outside and it is all I can do not to turn on our furnace.



New England Aster

The wealth of sunny days that we have throughout October to date means that there are lots of hours that I can sit in my garden and watch the last activity before snow blankets the landscape - of course I am doing this by moving my chair from shifting sun spot to shifting sun spot - drinking in the final warmth of the season as well as getting numerous views of the yard. Most of my plants have long lost their blooms with only one native, the aster, still really holding forth. This is a plant that seems to come in all sizes and a variety of colors.

I have planted three species:

- New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae*) which is a great plant that towers above the others not just in height but in its intense purple color and its stems loaded with flowers. That profusion of color could make one think that perhaps winter is not just around the corner if it weren't for the fact that it is surrounded by the dead heads of golden rod and brown-eyed Susans.
- Large leaved Aster (*Aster macrophyllus*) which is much shorter and bears a myriad of small light purple flowers. This plant huddles in the shady areas of my yard - newly planted I am pleased that it is starting to fill in some of the remaining bare areas and I look forward to its return in greater numbers in the coming year.
- Blue Wood Aster (*Aster cordifolius*) The plant has a variety of flower colors, from white to light blue or purple which add a nice contrast to the explosion from the New England aster. Actually this plant greets me on my daily walks along the river so it is wonderful to see nearby



Blue Wood Aster

nature in my back yard.

So as the days get progressively cooler, I daily gaze at my lovely asters, waiting for their demise - a sure sign that the colorful fruits of my gardening are no more for another season.

Featured Native Plant (Vine): Virginia Creeper

Common Names: Virginia Creeper, Woodbine, Five-leaved Ivy, American Ivy, False Grapes, Thicket Creeper

Scientific Name: *Parthenocissus quinquefolia*

Family: Vitaceae

IDENTIFICATION

Habitat: Found on wood edges

Height: Vines can grow up to 30 to 40 feet.

Leaves: Has palmately compound alternate leaves having toothed margins and with 5 leaflets). They vary from 2 - 6 inches in size. The leaves are red when they first appear, turn green as they mature, then change to a striking deep red in the fall.

Flowers: Are very small, greenish-white clusters. They bloom in summer (July - August).

Fruit: The bluish black fruit is approximately ¼ inch in diameter. The seeds are dispersed in nature by birds.

Overall characteristics: This vine can develop very thick stems. It is able to cling to surfaces by tendrils that end in sucker-like disks. Eventually rootlets grow out of the stems better anchoring it to any structure - natural or man-made. The new stems are brownish green and finely hairy, as they mature pale raised spots along the stem and the stem turns a purplish brown.



GARDEN TIPS

This is an aggressive plant which can grow as ground cover or climb up walls.

Plant Hardiness: Zone: 3-9

Sun/Shade Needs: Grows in sun or shade anywhere

Soil Needs: Not picky, growing in almost any soil

Planting: Spacing: 24-36 inches

Propagation: Take tender cuttings and put in a glass of water where it will develop roots. From seed one can direct sow in the fall or plant in the spring after cold moist stratification.

Care: Because this is a very hardy, aggressive plant, if you wish to control it, cut it back in the spring. This will also keep it from growing a thick trunk. It may be hard to remove from buildings without damaging the outer surface of the structure, so beware of where you let it spread to.. Water regularly but don't overwater

Friends & Foes: Its berries are considered an important winter food for birds. Additionally for birds it provides perches, nesting places and leaf surfaces to find food. Because of this thick growth and many branches it is also a wonderful cover for small animals.

NOTES

Current Use/Interest: This plant may cause skin irritation or allergic reaction

Historic Use/Interest: Native Americans used the plant for curing diarrhea, difficult urination, swelling, and lockjaw. The bark has been used as a tonic and expectorant; the berries for rheumatic complaints; and the roots for diarrhea.

Twin Cities Chapter Webpage has a New Look

Web browsing has significantly changed the amount of information available to us and how we make choices in our daily lives. First impressions and the ease of finding what we are looking for can greatly influence these choices.

On October 12, our chapter's publicity and marketing communications team launched a new look for our home page. The introduction has been shortened to allow the Calendar to be more visible, and Contact Us has moved to the bottom of the page.

There are also some new links. Conference will now take you to information about past conferences and a new site with complete information about our upcoming conference. Bulletins has been added to provide news updates for our chapter or information on non-chapter activities that support the Wild Ones mission. Volunteers will offer suggestions on how you can become more active, either at the chapter level or within your community. A huge thanks goes to Jim Sipe and Heather Holm for their technical and design work.

We're not done yet.

Some of these pages are still under construction or are yet to be updated. You can help by providing us with information about an upcoming event in your community for the bulletin board; a favorite website, garden, book or native plant supplier for our resource list; or a simple reminder that information on the site is no longer relevant. Photos from your garden or from a recent native plant tour are also welcome.

As Wild Ones visibility grows, so will the number of guests visiting our homepage, making it very important we make a good first impression. We hope to have the majority of the changes completed before the general public becomes aware of Wild Ones 2011 Design With Nature Conference. When ready, we will share our page on the more popular social media sites.

Your part

Please take a minute, visit the site at www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities/ and let us know what you think.

Forward your comments to juliakay@scc.net.

Email glitch: You may not have received monthly emails from our Twin Cities WO chapter the past few months due to a glitch (i.e., probably because our membership mailing list is well over 100, which has been an unknown limit for emailing by national). We think this has been resolved and you will again be receiving several per month. You'll recognize our chapter e-mails as they're generally prefaced with "WO" on the subject line for easy identification.

WO Phone: Our chapter has a "virtual office" that we use as a phone message center. The number is 612-293-3833. Please call whenever you have a question, information to share about a native plant related event, or would like to know when or where our chapter will be meeting. A volunteer will return your call.

Welcome New & Renewing Members

As of 1 October 2010 according to the national website, our chapter had 131 active members. Thank you to these new and returning members for their support of Wild Ones. Whether you've just joined or have been a member for several years we look forward to your participation. Besides this newsletter, visit us at www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities <<http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities>>.

Aanestad, Arden; Bassett, Leigh; Bednarski, Joanne; Bittinger, Tom & Julie; Blood, Liz & Bill; Bonsignore, Gina; Damon, Paul & Susan; Doering, Dean & Scribner, Lisa; Eckhardt, Anne & Steve; Foster, Helen; Frelich, Lee; Harper-Lore, Bonnie; Johnson, Phil & Weeks, Mary; Keegan, Carol R & Jack E; Kiesling, Frances; Kjar, Arlene; Kline, Tara; McKenzie, Ute M; Martinka, Kristie (Kris) & Jim; Mayberg, Jeremy & Amy-Ann; Moran, Jane & Jack; Nelson, Christian; Nolte, Mary; Owens-Pike, Douglas; Satterness, Bill; Simonet, Carmen; Solowiej, Anna Moga; Strohmeyer, Deb; Tennant, Tom; Troha, Susan & Todd; Wardell-Gaertner, Becky; Wellman, James M

Further thoughts from our co-chair, Marty Rice:

Without question another major factor providing vitality to strong non-profit organizations is financial support. An appeal from national Wild Ones was recently sent to our members hoping to generate needed funds to sustain our mission of environmental education. Any funding you can contribute to WO whether in the form of membership and/or donations will be greatly appreciated and responsibly used in pursuit of our mission.

2010 Officers

Co-Chairs: Marty Rice/Marilyn Jones

Secretary: Kris Martinka

Treasurer: Brent Holm

Board Members

Hospitality: Rose Meyer

Membership: Marty Rice

Merchandise: Trudy Poquette

Newsletter: Mary Schommer

Nokomis Naturescape: Vicki Bonk

Outreach: **OPEN**

Photographer/Historian: John Arthur

Programs: Carmen Simonet/John
Arthur

Public Relations: Julia Vanatta

Design With Nature Conf.: Marilyn Jones

Tours: **OPEN**

Website: Jim Sipe

MEMBERSHIP

Benefits To You

- Monthly meetings featuring excellent presentation on a wide array of native landscaping topics.
- Receive the new member packet, including our handbook full of information and activities on natural landscaping.
- Receive the bi-monthly Wild Ones Journal, with articles and information to inspire and educate you about natural landscaping.
- Free admission to most Wild Ones' events, such as our garden tours, and native plant walks and sales/swaps.
- Reciprocity with other chapters' meetings.
- Share experiences and expertise with other like-minded native gardeners.
- Access to the Wild Ones library of native landscaping books.
- Support for the Wild One's Mission.
- Membership dues and donations are tax deductible

Join or Renew

1. Sign up at meetings, or
2. Call Marty Rice at 952-927-6531, or
3. Access the national website at www.for-wild.org



Twin Cities Chapter

c/o Marty Rice

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St. Louis Park, MN 55416

www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities

OUR 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