



Twin Cities Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

August 2011 Volume 9, Issue 3

Editor's Note. For those of you who actively read the information provided on our new website, you will notice that much of the newsletter contains articles that have already been posted on the web. This will continue to be the case as we stay apace with the ever changing world of communication. So for those who still like to see their information all at once or do not have computer access or frequent the web site, we will continue to publish a monthly newsletter

Upcoming Events/Monthly Meetings

MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS...

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

Tuesday, 20 September 2011, Twin Cities monthly meetings begin The monthly programs for this coming fall have not yet been finalized. Please visit our new website to find information on what will be presented as the meeting dates for September and October approach. For those of you without an internet connection, please contact Marilyn Jones (518-928-7819) or Carmen Simonet (651-699-3029).

REMINDER OF SUMMER EVENTS...

Tuesday 23 August 2011, Nokomis Naturescape Historic Walking Tours

Julia Vanatta continues hosting tours of the Lake Nokomis Naturescape (Prairie Gardens and Oak Savanna Restoration) on the east side of Lake Nokomis in Minneapolis, near the intersection of Lake Nokomis Parkway and 50th St. Julia will talk about how settlement and development changed the landscape near and around Lake Nokomis as she leads guided tours of the Nokomis Naturescape demonstration gardens. In the event of severe weather, confirm tour by calling 612-382-2800.

Nokomis Naturescape (Volunteer Gardening) *(Prairie Gardens and Oak Savanna Restoration located on the east side of Lake Nokomis in Minneapolis, near the intersection of Lake Nokomis Parkway and 50th St.)*

Volunteers are still needed at the Naturescape on Tuesday evenings through September, from 6:30 – 8:30. We welcome all help to keep our garden a native plant showcase, inspiring park patrons to go native in their own yards and to see the beautiful liveliness of natural habitats. ***For more information or to volunteer, call Vicki Bonk 612/727-3562***

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Meeting Notes

March 2011, Nature Writing and Illustrating: The Art of Journaling (Greg Lecker).

This meeting was of a different nature, exemplifying how Greg Lecker takes what he sees in nature and converts it into words and illustrations. Greg opened by reading chronological excerpts from his column, View from the Bridge, taking us through the seasons in words that created images for all to see. A little history of the column: What began as an educational article to help the community understand a restoration in progress around Bassett Creek and Bryn Mawr Meadows, evolved into a monthly feature of a local newsletter. Greg uses his journal to anticipate what will be in bloom or what wildlife will be in the area at the time of publishing, making each article timely for readers. Although much of his writing centers around areas within his community and Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden, he also writes about travels to the Boundary Waters, Isle Royale National Park and other adventures in the natural world.

April 2011, Innovative and Aesthetic Storm Water Management Strategies (Stacy Anderson, President of Earth Wizards, Inc.). This presentation started with a quote from Albert Einstein: “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that caused them.” This set the stage for Stacy Anderson’s philosophy on finding innovative solutions for storm runoff, a topic that is getting increasing attention as people become more aware of it’s impacts. The popularity of rain gardens as a partial answer to this problem has helped advance interest in implementing solutions to runoff. Businesses are also paying more attention as cities are taxing them for storm water runoff from their properties. Earth Wizards is a company that designs and builds projects to reduce runoff from both businesses and people’s homes.

Stacy quickly went through all the steps most of us are familiar with that should be done before actually putting a shovel or dozer into action on a runoff retention project. This primarily involves a thorough site assessment to include: measuring roofs, determining surface grades, soil analysis, and measuring the entire site. Additionally she gave a quick and easy test for measuring the rate of infiltration - another piece of the puzzle needed to determine what can or cannot be retained on one’s property. [Dig a hole in the ground put in a measuring tape, add water and measure the drop in height from start to finish = the drop/hour.]



Trinity storm runoff system

This was not, however, a lesson in creating rain gardens; but rather an overview of the types of projects that Earth Wizards has built throughout the area. There were numerous slides showing the thought process, actual construction and the final product. One in particular stuck in my mind as it was just down the road from me - at Holy Trinity Church just off Lake Street in Minneapolis. In fact almost the very next day following our meeting there was an article in the Minneapolis Star and Tribune on this very same site as well as references to other similar projects done by Earth Wizards. It was interesting to hear about the efforts made at Trinity to contain the water coming off one of the roofs; the placement and use of permeable and impermeable materials; and the lessons learned from the experience. Although not discussed at the meeting the newspaper article further talked about savings such as costs and pollutant reduction. Holy Trinity was being billed \$4,000 a year by the city. This will be reduced, with an eventual savings as construction cost about \$90,000 with over 50 percent of this offset by grants. Pollutants from roofs (especially where tar has been used) and parking lots will no longer flow into the storm sewer system.

May 2011, The Soil Foodweb: Considerations and the Use of Compost Tea (Karen

Graham). The soil is alive! It's rich, smells good, and is amazingly complex. Generally there is more life and diversity living underground than above. We know as much about the life of our soil as we do the deep sea life because both are conditions alien to support our lives. The soil food web creates a dynamic image of an interdependent system. The communities above and below ground are made up of complex relationships and natural nutrient cycling. The cycles that permit nutrients to flow from soil to plant are interdependent. They proceed only with the help of the living organisms that constitute the soil community. Soil microorganisms are the essential link between mineral reserves and plant growth. Most key to this are nutrient availability and retention, water retention, and aeration of the soil.

Compost tea is a liquid inoculant of beneficial organisms and nutrients extracted from compost. In the brewing process, the organisms from the compost multiply and become highly active from the addition of food, water and air. The water is oxygenated through aeration to favor the growth of beneficial bacteria and fungi over pathogens. You may think of the process as similar to making beer with all the needed skill and care for producing the kind of results that you want. At the end of the brewing cycle, you have a concentrated liquid of beneficial bacteria, fungi, protozoa, and nematodes that can be sprayed directly onto soil or plants. Careful application of compost teas can speed up the process of balancing the soil biology... but achieving the proper mix requires time and testing.

Tea applied as an amendment was initially introduced by Rudolf Steiner to farmers in Germany using manure. Rudolf called the process of revitalizing the soil biodynamics. Elaine Ingham's work renewed attention to the benefits of using compost tea with her research beginning in the early 80's.

Who's using compost tea? The list is a long one. To name a few, Harvard University - Campus Services, University of Vermont Extension - Brattleboro, Ohio State University Extension, New York City Central Park, San Francisco Golden Gate Park, city and county of Boulder CO, and vineyards including Benziger, Fetzer, and Grgich Hills.

Compost tea offers us an opportunity to be part of the regenerative cycle of nature working. Quite simply, healthy soil supports healthy plants which in turn leads to greater diversity above and below ground for a more resilient and abundant living.

Karen invited all to give her company a call (763-551-9572) or email (EarthTea@comcast.net) to learn more. Earth Tea LLC offers individuals, communities, and organizations an alternative to land and plant care through application, education, and consultation on setting up their own systems of composting and compost tea brewers.

Background: Karen worked over 20 years in the food industry developing products from nutritional supplements to yogurt. Companies include Novartis, Dole, General Mills, and consulting for major food companies across the country. She has degrees in nutrition and food science from the University of Wisconsin and Nebraska respectively. Her studies included an emphasis in microbiology. EarthTea LLC was incorporated in 2011. Intensive study and practice of using compost tea began 5 years before this with the introduction to permaculture design through the Permaculture Research Institute - Cold Climate. The idea of revitalizing the soil through an environmentally-friendly method became an opportunity to work with horticultural-related issues and basis for environmental education.

Gardener's To-Do List (August, September, October)

- * Stay on top of weeding: just a few minutes a day (depending on the size of your garden) can catch them before they go to seed.
- * Water newly planted additions to your garden during drier periods.
- * Turn compost heap every week or two and don't allow it to completely dry out.
- * Take cuttings to start new plants.
- * The cooler temperatures of autumn are a great time to add plants. Keep watered to help them establish well before winter.
- * Look around the garden and cut back plants that are invading their neighbors.
- * Replenish mulch as needed (2-4 inches).
- * If you plan to gather seeds to share or start more plants yourself, watch seed heads for readiness to harvest.
- * Clip off seed heads before they ripen on plants that are too "exuberant" in your garden.
- * Mow a path through meadow and prairie gardens so that you can stroll through and enjoy the plants.
- * Take pictures (and notes) to aid in winter planning for next year - and for your upcoming "show and tell".
- * Consider doing your garden cleanup in the spring: standing plants bring winter interest to your yard and continue to provide shelter and food for wildlife.
- * Determine where you might want to expand your garden and smother the grass with newspaper/cardboard and mulch. By spring, the area will be ready for planting (or winter sow some of your collected seeds).



Book Review, Internet Info, You Name It!!

Landscape Design Award Winner: Our own Twin Cities Chapter WO member Douglas Owens-Pike founder and owner of EnergyScapes, a landscape design company, was the winner of the Midwest Home and Minnesota Nursery Association 2011 Award in the 'Designer in Bloom' Category. This award is given to a designer who has been in the business for 15 years or more. Per his company name his firm specializes in designing landscapes that reduce your carbon footprint by lessening the use of electricity for cooling in the summer and heating in the winter and can also decrease the demand for water, chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Congratulations on the award!!



Chemical Reaction There was a great turnout for the film that our chapter co-sponsored at the Riverview Theater in June. Interestingly enough there was also an article about the movie in the latest National Wild Ones magazine. So for those of you that missed the show you can read all about it there. In my neighborhood the big question was - so now what do I do about dandelions, if I stop using pesticides? I asked Julia Vanatta (one of our chapter members - and board member - who has done some research on this subject and also works at a hardware store that sells gardening and lawn products). Her advice was to cut

your grass at a 3 - 4 inch blade length. Then to control weeds - take them out by hand if they are already established or with corn gluten when they are a pre-emergent >> this would be in early to mid-May for crab grass and other cool season plants and early to mid-August for dandelions and other perennial weeds. Corn gluten is in stock where she works in May and August so it is available when needed. I am sure it can be purchased at other venues throughout the Twin Cities. There is also a product called milorganic - a fertilizer that feeds the grass and keeps it healthy - but has no weed control features



Revitalization Day Both the Twin Cities and St. Croix Oak Savanna WO chapters took part in a Landscape Revival official gathering at the Rainbow Foods Community Pavilion in Roseville, MN which was organized by the St. Paul Audubon Society and the Shoreview Green Community. This event consisted of a Market and native plant exposition. Our chapters were among nine other educational exhibitors and eleven native plant companies who offered a complete array of native trees, shrubs, grasses, ferns and forbes all in one spot.

A BIG THANK YOU to WO members who have helped with the following Outreach programs thus far this year: Minneapolis Home & Garden Show, Living Green Expo, "Chemical Reaction" film and the Native Plant Expo. They are:

Bill Allen, Bill Blood, Vicki and Richard Bonk, Donna Busch, Sydney Campbell, Nancy Christen, Tom Dickhudt, Sheryl Erickson, Anne Hanley, Esther Hope, Marilyn Jones, Fran Kiesling, Ginger Koop, Shirley Mah Kooyman, Mary Alyce Krohnke, Elaine Larson, Kris & Jim Martinka, Kim Medin, JoAnn Musumeci, Jim Nelson, Molly Rosenberg, George Skinner, Kathy Sidles, Carmen Simonet, Dave Stack, Hannah Texler, Julia Vanatta, Mary Weeks.

If I've missed anyone please let me know so we can acknowledge you in the next newsletter!

- Marty Rice

Featured Native Plant: Canadian Anemone

Editor's Note: This is a highly aggressive plant and not usually recommended by landscape businesses as a plant to add to your garden. Used with care (isolated in areas where one wants it to be filled and don't care if it takes over entirely) though it can look quite nice!

Common Names: Canada Windflower, Meadow Anemone, Round-Leaf Thimbleweed, Round-Headed Anemone

Scientific Name: *Anemone canadensis*

Family: Buttercup (Ranunculaceae)

IDENTIFICATION

Habitat: Found in moist, open places, often along roads and railways. Amazingly enough according to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service this plant is endangered in Connecticut, Maryland and Tennessee. Not to worry here in Minnesota.

Height: 12 to 24 inches

Leaves: The deeply-lobed light/deep green basal leaves appear on long-stalks. Lower stem leaves are in a whorl of up to five. Leaves are deeply divided having three to seven lobes, with toothed margins and distinctive veins.

Flowers: The 1 to 1 ½" wide white flowers are found on long, hairy stalks. There are 5 (sometimes 4), petal-like sepals around yellow stamens and pistils. Petals are absent. When pollen is ripe and ready to be released, sepals produce anthers by closing at night and cloudy days. Blooms late spring to early summer (May - July)

Fruit: Clusters of flat, rounded, green, ¼ inch fruits are produced in mid summer.

Overall characteristics: It often grows in patches as it spreads by rhizomes which allows it to pop up almost anywhere. The name "Anemone" is either (1) an ancient Greek and Latin corruption of the Semitic name for Adonis - according to ancient lore this flower sprang from Adonis' blood; or (2) the Greek word for wind (which spreads the seeds). This plant can be distinguished from others in the genus by its sessile (stalkless) leaves which surround a stem and have 3-7 lobes.

GARDEN TIPS

Good in cottage and woodland gardens

Plant Hardiness: Zone: 2 - 7

Sun/Shade Needs: Full sun to partial shade to shade.

Soil Needs: Well-drained, sandy loam.

Planting: Plant 1 foot apart; Spread: It seems as if it really could spread forever

Propagation: To increase species it is best to divide the rhizomes in the early spring or fall when plants are dormant. However, this plant is a survivor and can be moved at almost any time. Take a several inches long piece of rhizome with good roots and visible buds, plant ½ inch deep with bud just at the soil surface. Gather seeds when they mature in the summer and sow immediately in a cold frame or can sow stored seeds as soon as possible in late winter or early spring. Usually the seeds mature and produce flowers within 2 years.



Care: Easy. Aggressive plant, spreading by rhizomes and can become invasive. May be able to control somewhat with 6 inch-wide plastic or metal strips. As clumps of the anemone become crowded, flowering may decrease. Divide if too crowded.

Companion Plants: Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*). This plant is so prolific it will strive to become a companion with any plant in your garden

Friends & Foes: No serious insect or disease problems. Bees and syrphid flies pollinate the flowers. Seems to be immune to rabbits.

NOTES

Current Use/Interest: Touching it may produce skin irritation. Ingesting it could cause gastroenteritis.

Historic Use/Interest: The plant's extensive root system was used by Native Americans as an astringent for wounds, sores and nosebleeds. The root contains anemonin, said to be a potent antiseptic. An infusion of the root was used as an eyewash to treat crossed eyes, twitches and eye poisoning. A tea of the roots was used in the treatment of headaches and dizziness.

Bumblebees - Our Friends

Editor's note: The following was written by Marilyn Jones and published on our website as an encourage to members to look at and purchase offerings in our spring plant sale. It is reprinted here with a list of plants added at the end as taken from the plant sale brochure.

Native bees are the **most important** group of pollinators. It's been said that "every third spoonful of our food comes courtesy of pollinators like bumblebees." (from "Why Humblebees," *Wild Ones Journal*, March/April 2007 by Maryann Whitman)

There are at least 54 species of the genus *Bombus* (bumblebees) native to North America. Several of our native *Bombus* species use sonication to pollinate in which the bee grasps the flower, wraps its body under the anthers (pollen-bearing structures) and vibrates causing the flower to spill its pollen. With this method, the bumblebee is 400 times more efficient than honeybees at any pollination chore. They can visit 30 to 50 flowers per minute.

Our native bumblebees began to experience diseases after European breeders exported bees to the US for commercial greenhouse purposes. Because it is difficult to detect infections early in the life of a colony of bees, they are sent out to greenhouses throughout the country and come in contact with wild colonies. Both the spread of diseases and genetic interbreeding pose threats to co-evolved plant-pollinator relationships and habitats. The numbers of several subspecies of *Bombus* in the NW have been plummeting in recent years with a threat of extinction.

Many of our native pollinators are solitary bees that are ground-dwelling and prefer open dirt areas with undisturbed soil. Others build nests of mud and dig tunnels in snags. As they have no storehouse of honey

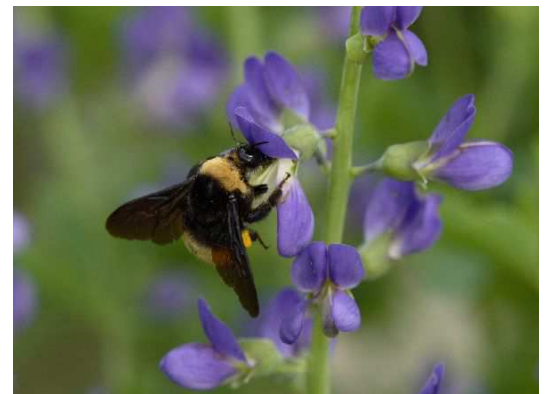


Photo by John Arthur

to protect, they are docile and unlikely to sting. If you encounter a colony of bees, don't worry, just leave it undisturbed to do its pollination, and they will move on. We can help our bee friends by planting "such a variety of natives that something is blooming in every season. The nectar and pollen in these blossoms may be saving someone's life." (from "Why Humblebees," *Wild Ones Journal*, March/April 2007 by Maryann Whitman)

Some things we should do –

1. Plant a lot of native plants.
2. Provide various plants that bloom from Spring through Fall.
3. Plant flowers that have a range of colors.
4. Plant flowers that have various shapes.
5. Use NO pesticides.
6. Leave areas of bare soil for bumblebee nests.

Twin Cities Wild Ones chapter offered a Bumblebee Favorites flat at our 2011 Spring plant sale. For those of you that missed this opportunity the following plants were included in this special tray:

- Bottlebrush Grass (*Hystrix patula*)
- Great Blue Lobelia (*Lobelia siphilitica*)
- Wild Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- Heart-leaved Aster (*Aster cordifolius*)
- Elm-leaved Goldenrod (*Solidago ulmifolia*)
- Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium reptans*)
- Royal Catchfly (*Silene regia*)
- Sweet Coneflower (*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*)

President's Message - Marilyn Jones

Tours Are Awesome Eye Candy: Hasn't this been a memorable summer - way too cold and rainy followed by toooo hot. I prefer 70's, tolerate 80's, but a string of 90's is too hot for pretty much everyone. Fortunately those of us with native gardens are reminded once again of the awesome way our native plants adapt to whatever the weather dishes out.

As a reminder, June, July and August are the months Wild Ones enjoy the growing availability of native gardens, native landscaping in and around the Twin Cities. June and July tours were tasty dishes of Eye Candy and I expect the same in August. I hope you each take time to enjoy some garden tours before we settle into our Fall schedule of monthly educational meetings. Its a win/win situation - you get to see the fruits of someone's creative gardening and the gardener gets to enjoy sharing and interpreting their project. We'll see you there.

Marilyn

The 3rd annual MINNEAPOLIS MONARCH FESTIVAL: At The Nokomis Naturescape

A celebration of Minnesota's state butterfly will flutter to Lake Nokomis on Saturday, Sept. 10, from 10am – 4pm. The third annual event honors the monarch butterfly's amazing 2500-mile migration from Minnesota to Mexico. The event raises awareness of the need to provide and protect monarch habitat through art, music, dance, games, native plants, and prairie tours of the Nokomis Naturescape Garden. The flavor of the Minnesota Mexico connection is further highlighted through the food vendors. Last year the Monarch Festival was enjoyed by over 5000 people from many backgrounds - a love of the monarch butterfly held in common. (Visit www.monarchfestival.org)

Invitation to Wild Ones *The Minneapolis Monarch Festival committee welcomes you to share your knowledge of the benefits of native plant landscaping at the festival.* Promoting native plant habitat is an essential mission of the Monarch Festival. The Growing Monarch Habitat project was started by Naturescape Gardeners in 2005. We chose the beloved monarch butterfly as our ambassador for including native plants in the home garden. Seeds for the festival were planted with this initial effort. Indeed the charm of the monarch resonates with many! The monarch butterfly's survival depends on the availability of its only host plant – the milkweeds and an abundance of nectar plants all along the migration route. The indispensable role of native plants cannot be over-emphasized for the monarch (and that follows for other beneficial native fauna).

The festival will have a designated tent with native plant info and native plant experts/enthusiasts ready to answer festival goer questions. This is a great opportunity for **Wild Ones** to advocate for native plants and be of guidance to the unfamiliar public. If this appeals to you, please help bring native plant education to the next step at the festival. Interested? For further information or to sign-up, contact Vicki Bonk at 612-727-3562 or email vbbonk@usiwireless.com.

Do you speak Spanish? The Minneapolis Monarch Festival native plant booth could use your services. Contact Vicki Bonk.

Welcome New & Renewing Members

As of 1 July 2011 according to the national website, our chapter had 140 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

Anderson, Stacy; Bergeron, Sandy; Bender, Cathy & Jeff; Brennan, Deirdre & Skemp, Vincent; Cooley, Meredith; Crants, James; Cunningham, Val; Dean, Mollie; Doering, Dean, 7 Scribner, Lisa; Harstad, Carolyn & Peter; Havelin, Lisa; Holm, Brent & Heather; Holman, Bonnie; Hoops, James P.; Houle, Terry; Hughes, Kristina; Johnson, Carrie Anne; Kraft, Barbara & Richard; Krischik, Dr. Vera; Lynch, Michael; Meyer, Rose; Oppmann, Hillary; Porwit, Jennifer; Rouda, Ilona & Bob; Satterness, Bill; Steiger, Kathleen; Tennant, Tom; Vanatta, Julia; Wellman, James

2011 Officers

President: Marilyn Jones
Vice President: Shirley Kooyman
Secretary: Becky Wardell-Gaertner
Treasurer: Elaine Larson

Board Members

Audio Visual: John Arthur
Hospitality: Rose Meyer
Membership: Marty Rice
Merchandise: Trudy Poquette
Newsletter: Mary Schommer
Nokomis Naturescape: Vicki Bonk
Outreach: Marty Rice
Programs: Carmen Simonet
Public Relations: Julia Vanatta
Spring Expo: Marilyn Jones
Tours: Molly Rosenberger (**looking for 2nd**)
Volunteer Coordinator: Bill Blood
Website Development: Heather Holm
Webmaster: Heather Holm
WO Phone: Tammy Argus

Chapter Message Center: 612-293-3833

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



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

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