



August 2012 Volume 10, Issue 3

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, September 18, 2012: MINNESOTA - CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE, Bonnie Harper-Lore, author, educator, and native plant restorationist. Invasive plants or weeds continue to spread across the continent. Consequently, Minnesota is fast becoming a melting pot of weed species. Many of these plants were accidentally introduced to our landscape, but some have been purposefully imported. This talk will explain how these weeds have cost the United States, both ecologically and economically and what you as gardeners can do about it.

Tuesday, October 16, 2012: NATIVE BEES OF MINNESOTA AND THE NATIVE PLANTS THEY VISIT, Heather Holm, native plant photographer, and blogger at www.restoringthelandscape.com. Information will be provided on how to attract, foster and identify native bees in our wildlife gardens.

Tuesday, November 20, 2012 (Annual Membership Meeting, Potluck, Seed Exchange, and Presentation): **ESTABLISHING A NATIVE LANDSCAPE FROM SEED: The Process, Materials, Techniques, and Follow up Maintenance**, Josh Richardson, Prairie Restoration. Outdoor seeding will be discussed at this presentation.

REMINDER OF SUMMER EVENTS... Exclusive tour for Wild Ones members only.
12 August 2012; 1:30 pm Tour of Lynn Steiner's Landscape.
Location: 15250 May Ave. N, Stillwater.

Lynn and Ted Steiner have lived in their 115-year-old farmhouse since 1985. They began installing gardens and landscaping soon after moving in and it remains an ongoing process. There are several mixed borders around the house, each containing a mix of native and nonnative perennials, grasses, shrubs, and trees. There is a raised-bed vegetable garden that also includes some herbs and small fruits. The prairie restoration/reconstruction is just under an acre in size. It was seeded in fall 2005 and was burned this spring. Lynn and Ted have been renovating their woodland since 2004, removing invasives, installing paths, and incorporating new plants. Their newest project is a savanna restoration started in spring 2011. It was burned for the first time this spring.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Upcoming Events/Monthly

Meetings.....	1
Meeting Notes	2
Gardener's To-Do List	5
Brown Thumb	6
Featured Native Plant.....	7
President's Message	8
Monarch Festival	8

Lynn Steiner, horticulturist, speaker, photographer and author of several beautiful and informative books on using native plants in gardens and landscapes, will guide us through her own yard and gardens. Lynn's book *Landscaping with Native Plants of Minnesota* is a feast for the mind and soul with 192 pages and more than 320 color photographs. Lynn is a national honorary director of Wild Ones and writes the column on native plants in "Northern Gardener" magazine. Lynn will have autographed copies of 4 of her books available for purchase. Please note that credit cards will not be accepted; cash or checks only.

1. *Rain Gardens: Sustainable Landscaping for a Beautiful Yard and a Healthy World* (Coauthor)
2. *Prairie-Style Gardens: Capturing the Essence of the American Prairie Wherever You Live*
3. *Landscaping with Native Plants of Wisconsin*
4. *Landscaping with Native Plants of Minnesota*

It takes about 45 minutes from downtown Minneapolis. Look for a red farmhouse and barn on the west side of the road and a garden flag on the mailbox. There is plenty of parking near the house. Drive all the way up the driveway. At the top of the driveway, turn right and park in one of two areas next to the barn.

Meeting Notes

March 2012 Ecological Planning Strategies, Carmen Simonet (ASLA). Carmen is a landscape architect, who specializes in creating environmentally friendly landscapes. Learn more about her work at www.simonetdesign.com. A goal for many Wild Ones is to reduce the size of our lawns and add native plants for beauty and ecological value. In the process, we discover plants spread, move around, grow larger than expected, and sometimes disappear entirely. Ecological planting strategies embrace and work with the dynamic nature of the landscape. As you develop your plan or work in your garden here are a couple of strategies from Carmen's presentation.

Observe natural plant communities and the relationship between plants and site conditions (light, hydrology, soils, geology, nutrients, etc.). Select plants that match the conditions in your yard. If you have a semi-shady yard and well-drained loamy soils, groundcovers found in an oak forest community (wild geranium and Pennsylvania sedge) would do well.



Woodland groundcovers with leaf litter mulch to provide nutrients, hold moisture, and create habitat for beneficial insects.

Plants compete for resources (light, water, nutrients) and have different characteristics, to utilize limited resources. Learn about their different adaptations and growing characteristics, to create a planting of compatible species. Cup plant is a tall, wide, and fast growing plant. Such a competitive species, would quickly shade out and overtake a shorter plant, such as wild bergamot.

Carmen's Suggested books

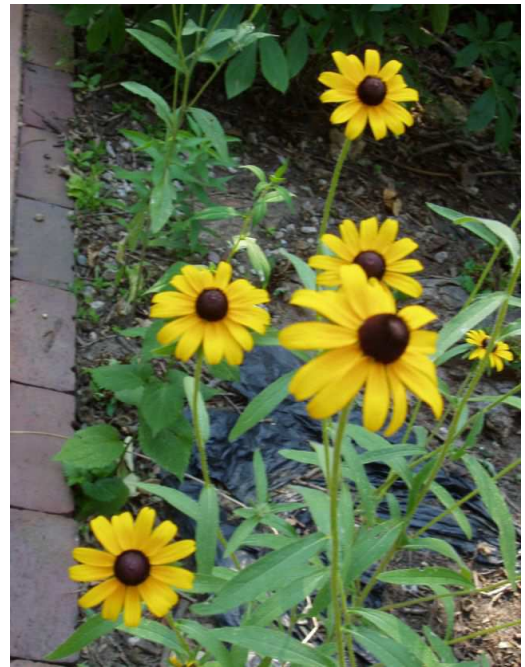
1. *Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-Scale Permaculture* by Toby Hemenway.
2. *Gardening with Prairie Plants: How to Create Beautiful Native Landscapes* by Sally Wasowski.
3. *Minnesota's St. Croix River Valley and Anoka Sandplain: A Guide to Native Habitats* by Daniel S. Wovcha, Barbara C. Delaney, and Gerda E. Nordquist.
4. *Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines for Urban and Rural America: A Planting Design Manual for Environmental Designers* by Gary L. Hightshoe.
5. *Noah's Garden: Restoring the Ecology of Our Own Back Yards* by Sara Stein.
6. *Prairie Moon Nursery Catalog and Cultural Guide*.

April 2012 Garden Defense. Adaptive Strategies for Beating Minnesota Weather, Fran Kiesling (ASLA). Climate continues to be a “hot” topic for many people. Fran Kiesling first reminded us that climate is a set of conditions that happens over a larger area and a longer period of time while weather consists of day to day changes. Both are changing with the following as examples:

- Higher nighttime lows all year long
- More degree days over 90 degrees Fahrenheit (more heat waves) Historically there has been one serious drought every 25 years.

There are a number of ways to beat extreme and unreliable weather. The following were discussed in detail:

1. Understand your garden. Know your soil (texture and moisture retention capabilities and what happens at night).
2. Evaluate and repair where you can. Determine what is working or not working on your property. Walk your property regularly to catch problems early. Photograph your property so there is a visual record of what you have.
3. Engage in careful, sustainable planning and tending practices. Do ecological planning and put plants where their needs will be met. It is best to do a 1, 3 and 5 year plan based on how much money and time you have to get these plans accomplished.
4. Select plants first for their ability to thrive in extreme weather.
5. Learn the cultural history and origins of plants you are considering (their provenance). Growing plants having local provenance increases the probability that your plant will be hardier.
6. Match each plant species to a garden location that meets the requirements of that species.
7. Use native plant species – those that have evolved to survive Minnesota extremes.
8. Build healthy soil, add organic matter. You can amend soil (get it tested) with compost or leaf mold or you can add mulch.
9. Catch problems early using the least lethal solution.



Rudbeckia: Heat/Drought Resistant plant

10. Enhance the natural strengths of your plants with windbreaks. These may be built or made up of vegetation.
11. Assemble plants in groupings with varied heights to magnify strengths.
12. Buffers reduce stress by having healthy soil, considering microclimates (see 14 below), knowing the plant's origins and being aware of what you yourself can accomplish.
13. Use water effectively.
14. Find and exploit you property's microclimates. Explore all places on your property that are different for some reason.

Following the above overview of how to help ameliorate the effects of extreme weather, specific conditions were discussed:

1. Snow/ice: Use plants that resist bending such as hemlock and black chokecherry. There are also very stiff perennials such as showy goldenrod that can be used.
2. Cold hardiness: This is a problem especially with fluctuating temperatures. Grouping into communities may lessen the impacts.
3. Heat/Drought (Note that 55 – 95 degrees F. is the optimum temperature for most plants.) If the temperature is greater than 95 degrees the plants can't metabolize and they will rob nutrients from their roots which contain stored energy. Plants that can tolerate these conditions include anise hyssop and rudbeckia
4. Heavy Rain Events: Slow the water down and spread it out with baffles, boulders, plants roots, mulch, and/or dry creek beds.
5. Humidity: In humid conditions a plant's metabolism slows. This can lead to fungal disease and can also affect pollination. The best conditions are having the humidity <70% combined with 70 degrees F; light to no wind; and the sun being out. High humidity condition cans be combated with good air circulation and good sanitation.

Given the great variability in weather, Fran wonders if we may have to return to the old time practices of our grandparents who developed an intimate relationship with the land. Basically by being mindful and committed:

1. Paying a lot of attention to the weather.
2. Using compost which builds soil health and recycle nutrients.
3. Using tough plants.

Fran's Suggested books

1. The Weather-Resilient Garden by Charles W. G. Smith (2004, Storey Publishing)
2. Gardening for a Lifetime: How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older by Sydney Eddison (2010, Timber Press)
3. Ecology for Gardeners by Steven B. Carroll & Steven D. Salt (2004, Timber Press)
4. IPM for Gardeners: A Guide to Integrated Pest Management by Raymond A Cloyd, Philip L. Nixon, & Nancy R. Pataky (2004 Timber Press)

Remember you are a buffer to your plants. Know yourself and how you can improve conditions for your plants.

Capturing the Beauty of Native Plants with Photography, John Maciejny, Natural Images Photography.

The May meeting consisted of a hands-on outdoor photography demonstration followed by a review of a slew of photographs. The former gave us a feeling for what one looks for when taking a picture and the latter demonstrated eye-catching to not so good photos to help drive home the elements of a good photograph. Given the fact that you really had to be there to get a full understanding of the subject, I offer only the following few salient points:

1. Read the manual for your camera!!
2. Follow the Rule of Thirds (with the knowledge that most "rules" are made to be broken). This is a basic composition concept to help one avoid placement of the main subject in the center of the

frame. For closer shots mentally divide the area you wish to photograph into thirds both horizontally and vertically. Then place your subject approximately at the intersection of one of the lines. If you are taking a shot that is more of a landscape-type picture, have the overall composition be divided into thirds. For example, position the horizon on the upper third with another major area of interest on the lower third.



Landscape photo following the 1/3 rule

3. Usually be sure that the main area of interest is in sharpest focus.
4. Give careful consideration to the entire composition. This is the key to an effective photograph. Framing, camera position, and focal length can turn a subject into a visually appealing photograph.
5. Think about going vertical instead of horizontal – or viewing a subject from the top down or the bottom up instead of straight on.

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.
- * Don't forget to take time and enjoy the wildlife that makes use of your native plants.



Brown Thumb

At our last monthly meeting in May Kris Martinka (keeper of our Chapter library) said that all library books could be taken out for the ENTIRE summer. What a deal!! I figured I should bone up on weeds since I not only had a grassless back yard filled with known natives and other questionable plants, but also had just acquired a community garden plot where numerous unknowns were starting to sprout. As a consequence I returned home that evening with *Weeds of the Northern US and Canada* by France Boyer & Richard Dickerson.

Per their introduction to the book, non-technical terms are used as often as possible which makes it a lot easier for people like me to understand the information provided. Looking at the meat therein, all weeds are shown alphabetically by family. There are details on a total of 175 species found within 48 families. Under each of the species, there is quick identification information followed by detailed descriptions of the seeds, seedlings, leaves, flowers, plant, and roots. Of special interest to me were the additional subsections on “Reasons for Concern” and Similar Species”.



Purslane

Keys to many of the mature plants, seedlings and grasses are displayed at the beginning along with photographs to assist in identification. This is exactly where I started when armed with the book I ventured out into my garden to discover what unwanted plants were actually lurking there. I must admit it was extremely helpful to do this during a period when most plants were flowering. It may be possible for some to identify species without this, but in looking at the seedling portion of the keys most looked so very much the same. I was amazed however that I think I actually did somehow stumble on correctly identifying one bothersome creeper from the leaves alone. This was the Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) which is a prolific seed producer

according to this book as evidenced by its growth in my vegetable garden where constant pulling is required to keep it in check.

Looking at my flowering plants I decided there were very few that fell into the weed category; however, I did find several. One that is ubiquitous for which I didn't even need the book to help me identify is Creeping Bellflower (*Campanula rapunculoides*). As I have previously stated this invader continues to abound in my yard. Per the “Reasons for Concern” this plant is considered to be a serious weed threat in lawns where it competes with the turf, robbing it of moisture and nutrients. So I continue to rip it out although I recognize the utter futility of this action since most neighbors consider it to be a nice looking flower that adds some interest to their garden. With this plant waving merrily at me from neighbor's yards along both of my fencelines, I know I will never be rid of it. My only small defense is to stealthily reach over and pluck out any of my neighbors' bellflowers that come a little too close to the fence. The second most common weed in my garden was the Common Plantain (*Plantago major* L.), which I find to be quite ugly although not as invasive as the bellflower. Luckily this has shallow roots and is very easy to pull out. Additionally I found Wild Mustard



Common Plantain

(*Brassica kaber*) which according to the book is a strong competitor with crops especially canola. Although I could eliminate this as a concern in my yard (not having planted any canola), I pulled it up in any case. When I moved from my yard to my garden plot I have Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) It's potential for major harm to my other plants is evident from the way it proliferates winding itself around anything in its way making it a serious competitor and likely killer of my vegetables. I am sure that because of its deep roots (under plant description) this is going to be another weed that will be impossible to eradicate.

So those are the main plants out of place (or weeds) in my domain. I thought this book was quite interesting and helpful. At first I was disappointed that there was nothing on removal of these pests. Then I remembered that the only means of elimination I was willing to use was hand pulling. So for me the absence of this information was not a serious defect. I would recommend this book for anyone who wants to know more about what is occupying their spaces or needs to identify an unknown visitor. This book will be back on the chapter library shelf come the first monthly meeting in September. Although you may want to wait until next May and keep it over the summer when all those weeds will be blooming!!

Featured Native Plant: Western Spiderwort

Common Names: Western spiderwort, Prairie spiderwort

Scientific Name: *Tradescantia occidentalis*

Family: Commelinaceae

IDENTIFICATION

Habitat: Grassy open places

Height: 18 - 24 inches

Leaves: The leaves are alternate and simple with the base of each leaf forming a sheath surrounding the stem. They are typically 12 - 15 inches long and approximately 3/8 inches wide and are toothless and smooth.

Flowers: Flowers are found in clusters at the end of the single stem. They are about 1½ inches wide; medium blue to purple; and consist of three broad triangular petals with pointed tips. Flowers open in the morning and are closed in the afternoon. Blooms are found in summer between June and July.

Fruit: Fruits typically contains 6 dark gray seeds.

Overall characteristics: This plant spreads by rhizomes. It is considered to be a threatened species in Canada. The genus was named for John Tradescantia (1608-1662) who worked as a gardener for Charles I of England.

GARDEN TIPS

Plant Hardiness: Zone: 3-9

Sun/Shade Needs: Sun to partial shade.

Soil Needs: Humus rich, well-drained soil.

Planting: Plant 12 to 15 inches apart.



Spiderwort: Morning and Afternoon

Propagation: This seeds can be directly sowed in the fall. If starting indoors it needs to be stratified for 120 days. To increase numbers the rootball can also be divided.

Care: Water regularly.

Companion Plants: Per Prairie Moon Nursery - this plant grows well with asters, goldenrods, ferns and mints.

Friends & Foes: This plant attracts bees, butterflies and birds. It is deer resistant

President's Message - Marilyn Jones

We, who are seeking ways to live in greater harmony with nature and have built slices of prairie and levels of shade in our yards and neighborhoods, are basking in the rewards of our efforts. Or should I say "roasting." Perhaps this is an early lesson in climate change and the stress on us humans to adapt. I personally have adapted by sweating profusely and whining, watering in the very early morning. Sweating is good on breezy days and early watering is recommended, whining is useless.

But what if there was not enough water. Surprisingly, the US is in the middle of the continuum of countries experiencing water stress. Minnesotans feel the stress on our watery geography this summer with overheated lakes resulting in fish die-off, excess bacterial pollution closing swimming beaches, and farmers on the edge of drought devastation of crops. The UN "International Decade for Action – Water for Life 2005-2015" report indicates there is enough freshwater on the planet for six billion people but it is distributed unevenly – too much is wasted, polluted, and unsustainably managed.

Yipes – big issue! What can each of us do about this? I don't have all the answers but I'm sure we need to learn all we can, advocate where we can, and try never to waste or pollute. Is there a rain barrel on every downspout? Do you have a 100-year rain garden? There must be so many initiatives we can take. Let's learn more about water in the coming year and expand our efforts to reduce stress on our Minnesota water supply.

The 4th annual Minneapolis Monarch Festival

Where: at the Nokomis Naturescape, Wild One's Twin Cities adopted public space!

Located at 5000 East Nokomis Parkway.

Minneapolis MN 55417

A celebration of Minnesota's state butterfly will flutter to Lake Nokomis on Saturday, Sept. 8, from 10am – 4pm. The fourth 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, a 4-acre native plant installation.

continued...



The flavor of the Minnesota Mexico connection can also be enjoyed through the food offerings! Last year the Monarch Festival was attended by over 7000 people of all ages and backgrounds, drawn together by a love and interest in the monarch butterfly. (www.monarchfestival.org)

Invitation to Wild Ones

The Wild Ones Twin Cities plays a vital role in preparing the Nokomis Naturescape for the festival, as well as being a participant. The Minneapolis Monarch Festival committee welcomes members to again, share your knowledge and energy. Promoting native plant habitat is an essential mission of the Monarch Festival. Naturescape Gardeners initiated the Growing Monarch Habitat project 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 butterflies 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 shared by native plant enthusiasts with educational info on hand. 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. We also need gardening help preparing the Naturescape for the event. Interested? For further information or to sign-up, contact Vicki Bonk at 612-727-3562 or email vbonk@usiwireless.com. Or call the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association at 612/724-5256 or visit www.nokomiseast.org.

Odds and Ends

Tidbits from the July 1 Twin Cities Chapter WO Board meeting.

1. **Help Wanted.** Our annual Design With Nature Conference for 2013 needs someone to be the overall chair for this effort. This person would be working with Julia Vanatta who lead the effort with assistance from many others this last year. If you are interested, please contact Julia via the chapter phone number.
2. **Membership Renewal Reminder.** Membership currently is at 163 members. We continue to grow which is wonderful. **BUT - If it is time for you to renew please do so!!**
3. **Board Member Changes.** We have new board members. (A big thank-you to Trudy Poquette who was merchandise chair for a number of years and did a great job!!)
 - A. Merchandise: Tammy Argus
 - B. Outreach: Sydney Campbell
4. **Possible New Initiative:** An interesting new idea that is being explored. That is to encourage youth participation and interest in native plants. Marilyn will research a Girl Scout Badge idea to award to youth participants.

Native Plants Sale: Plants for Raingardens, Prairies, Shorelines, and Woodlands. Fri. Aug. 3 (noon - 6 pm) and Sat. Aug. 4 (9 am - 4 pm) at Natural Shore Technologies, Inc., 5300 Hwy 12, Maple Plain. 612-703-7581. www.naturalshore.com

2011 Officers

President: Marilyn Jones

Vice President: Shirley Kooyman

Secretary: Becky Wardell-Gaertner

Treasurer: Elaine Larson

Board Members

Annual Conference: Julia Vanatta

Audio Visual: John Arthur

Hospitality: Rose Meyer

Internet Inquiries: JoAnn Musumeci

Membership: Marty Rice

Merchandise: Tammy Argus

Newsletter: Mary Schommer

Nokomis Naturescape: Vicki Bonk

Outreach: Marty Rice & Sydney Campbell

Programs: Carmen Simonet

Public Relations: Marilynn Tofkelson

Tours: Marty Rice & Marilyn Torkelson

Volunteer Coordinator: Bill Blood

Website: Heather Holm

WO Phone Inquiries: 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 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, 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



Twin Cities Chapter
c/o Marty Rice
4730 Park Commons Dr. #321
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

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