



August 2013 Volume 11, Issue 3

Upcoming Events/Monthly Meetings

REMINDER OF SUMMER EVENTS...

1. **SUMMER TOUR.**

a. **Thursday, August 29th from 6:30-8:30 pm.** Please join us for a tour of 3 residential gardens in the beautiful Tangletown neighborhood in south Minneapolis. The gardens are professionally installed and maintained by EnergyScapes, "Planning, Transforming and Nurturing Native Landscapes". Douglas Owens-Pike, an ecologically based landscape designer since the '80s, and staff from ESI will be leading the tour. The gardens are landscaped primarily in plants that are native to Minnesota. They will include rain gardens and a mix of habitats from sun to shade expertly nestled into an urban landscape. The tour is free and open to the public. We will meet at Fuller Park on the corner of Grand Avenue and 48th Street in south Minneapolis. The sites are just a few blocks apart so biking or carpooling between locations is encouraged.

b. **Saturday, September 14th from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.** Tour two special places with naturalist, educator and Wild Ones member Bonnie Harper-Lore. Bring water and lunch. We will start at the Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve. The reserve is 5,400 acres of native upland forests, prairie, lowland swamps and meadows. We'll explore an easy to walk trail that crosses a continuum of Minnesota plant communities within a short distance beginning with prairie and ending in a Northern tamarack bog. This will be followed by a tour of the Helen Allison Savanna, which (as described by the U of MM's website) is a beautiful 80 acre tract of sand savanna. For those that wish to carpool, meet at the Park and Ride in Mounds Niew at Co.Rd H&I-35W (NOT the nearby P&R at the Mermaid Supper Club). From here go north on I35W exiting at Hwy 10. Take Hwy 10 northwest to Hwy 65. Continue on Hwy 65 for about 16 miles to County Highway 24 (a right-hand turn between a BP station and a church). About 1 mile later turn left on County Highway 26. As the road curves to the right watch for a hidden driveway with a small Cedar Creek sign. Drive in and turn left at the first opportunity to their center.

2. **NOKOMIS NATURESCAPE (Wild One's**

Twin Cities adopted public space!

Located at 5000 East Nokomis Parkway.

Minneapolis MN 55417). *(This Prairie Gardens and Oak Savanna Restoration is near the intersection of Lake Nokomis*

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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**

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 17, 2013: CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATIVE PLANT GARDENING - CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES, Chester E. Wilson.

Tuesday, October 15, 2013: USING GRAZING ANIMALS TO RESTORE NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES AT FOUR METRO SITES. Wiley Buck, Restoration Ecologist .

Tuesday, November 19, 2013 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING. This meeting includes Election of Officers, a Potluck, Seed Exchange, and a Slide Show of Wild Ones member gardens.



Photo from Deborah Karasov, Great River Greening

November Slideshow of Wild Ones Member Gardens:

Please take pictures of your native plant gardens. To be included in the show, send up to 7 pictures anytime between now and the first of November to Carmen Simonet, program chair. Send by email (carmen"at"simonetdesign.com), dropbox or bring a flash drive with pictures to the Sept or Oct meeting for transfer.

Meeting Notes

May 2013 Minnesota Native Historically Edible Native Plants, Tom Dickhudt Chisago County Master Gardner, Oak Savanna Wild Ones and Sunrise Native Plants. The onset of this presentation commenced with a number of warnings everyone needs to keep in mind when looking for edibles:

1. Improper identification of a plant can be dangerous to your health.
2. Trying to identify a plant from a photo is not recommended.

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3. People can react differently to what they are eating.
4. It is possible to have edible and non-edible parts on a single plant.
5. Herbicides and pesticides may have been used on plants you are thinking of eating.
6. Beware of internet advice!!!

With the disclaimers for the purposes of avoiding law suits out of the way, a large number of edible plants that one could actually grow in one's back yard were discussed. Some of these are presented below. (*Editor's Note: I have presented them by broad categories which was not the way they were shown at the meeting.*)

TEAS

1. New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*). This is an excellent tea that was used as a substitute for black tea during the American Revolution. Thoroughly dry the leaves then prepare your cup of tea as you would any other.
2. Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum virginianum*). The leaves of this plant can be used either dried or fresh to make tea.
3. Staghorn Sumac (*Rhus typhina*). The red berries are used to make tea. The berries should be collected in late July to early August and washed in cold water. Following this put them in water and soak the berries until it suits your taste.
4. Labrador Tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*). This plant thrives in moist peat lands and black spruce areas. It can be found in the wild in Pine County and to the north of there). The plant is rich in vitamin C. As with regular tea, add boiling water, letting it steep for 5 minutes.
5. Rose Hip (*Rosa*). To make tea, add 1-2 teaspoons of the buds and petals to 1 cup of boiling water. Let steep for 10 minutes and then sweeten to taste.
6. Bee Balm or Bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*). Can be used to make tea. The flowers are edible and leaves may also be eaten raw or cooked



Staghorn Sumac -- Tea Source



Wild Grape

EDIBLE FRUITS

1. High Bush Cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*). This American species, although it has tart fruit, is edible. However, its European counterpart (*Viburnum opulus*) is not. One way of telling the difference is that birds also reject this latter plant.
2. Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*). Syrup and jelly can be made from the fruit. When preparing the juice from the berries, be sure NOT to crush the pits as they are poisonous. Syrup recipe: Combine 1 cup sugar, 1 cup chokecherry juice and 3 tablespoons of corn syrup. Heat, stirring, until the sugar is dissolved. Continue cooking over low heat for about another 5 minutes.
3. Black Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*). The American species which bears black fruit is edible while the European with red fruit is inedible.
4. Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*). Separate the seeds from the pulp and puree. Tom Dickhudt said that he has dried them (*Editor's Note: assumed for storage and later use*) and also used it in banana bread. It

is a great landscaping shrub and is a late berry fruit for birds.

5. Wild Grape (*Vitis riparia*). The fruit can be used to make jelly or wine.

6. Juneberry - also known as Saskatoon serviceberry (*Alemnchier alnifolia*). These berries suffer the same fate as hazelnuts in that the critters often are faster at consuming them than we are in gathering. The fruit matures around the same time as blueberries and look similar. The berries can be used in pies and jams. They were used by Native Americans in making pemmican by grinding the berries into the dried meat.

EDIBLE LEAVES

1. Ostrich Fern (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*). The fiddlehead of this plant is edible with the stem being the best part. It can be eaten either raw or cooked and tastes similar to asparagus. It was noted that other ferns may not be edible. One can distinguish this fern from others by the presence of a deep groove in the stalk and the fact that some of the fiddleheads lean backward instead of standing straight up..

2. Lambs Quarter (*Chenopodium album*). This is also known as wild spinach. It can be eaten raw or cooked. The young leaves work well in a salad.

3. Bee Balm - see TEA section above.

NUTS

1. Hazelnut (*Corylus americanum*). Difficult to gather as critters such as chipmunks and squirrels seem to be able to eat them faster than one can pick them. Additionally a small worm drills into the nut and eats the meat. If you are lucky enough to gather some they are good in stir fry dishes, gimlets and other recipes.

2. Hog peanut (*Amphicarpeaea bracteata*). Nuts are edible. This plant is very common in wooded areas.

Recommended Resources

The Forager's Harvest, Samuel Thayer

Field Guide to Edible Wild Plants, Bradford Angier

Edible and Medicinal Wild Plants of Minnesota and Wisconsin, Matthew Alf

Abundantly Wild: Collecting and Cooking Wild Edibles in the Upper Midwest, Teresa Marone

www.Pfaf.org (plants for a future)

www.Minnesotawildflowers.org

www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/horticulture/dg1133.html

Summer Tour Notes

May 11, 2013: Tour of Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden. On Saturday, May 11th, seventeen intrepid nature lovers set off from the Wirth Beach parking lot braving the cold blustery winds for the first Wild Ones tour of the season. Shirley Mah Kooyman, botanist and fellow WO member, led us to the back entrance of the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary dispensing wisdom as she went. She identified plants by their common and often Latin names as well as by their behavior (aggressive spreaders or well behaved clump forming) and edibility. We also learned about plant relations. For instance, did you

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Dwarf Trout Lily - Photo by Shirley Mah Kooyman

know that the Dutchman's breeches are related to Bleeding Hearts? And Virginia bluebells are related to lungwort? Shirley included many interesting facts. There was a short history lesson telling us why plants, because of the Doctrine of Signatures, often had scientific and common names that referenced human body parts like lungwort (*Pulmonaria*) or liverwort (*Hepatica*). And a lesson on how you can always tell a fern by its fiddlehead or crozier whether it is a knee high ostrich fern or a sky high tree fern. We also learned that the fruit of the Mayapple is edible and tasty like a mix of tropical fruits, but it is important to note that the seeds of the Mayapple are poisonous.

Some of the wildflowers were just peeking out of the ground, like the yellow Lady Slippers. Many others were in full flower such as the marsh marigolds. We got to enjoy two plants she did not expect to see still in bloom, the snow trillium, which typically blooms during maple syruping time with snow still on the ground and the endangered and rare Minnesota dwarf trout lily.

From the speckled leaves of the trout lily, to the stunning blue of the hepatica blossoms, we were able to admire over 50 woodland plants on our walk.

June Tour: Bush Lake Chapter of the Izaak Walton League. The excitement began even before our tour of the 5 acre grounds of the Bush Lake Chapter of Izaak Walton League a.k.a. “the Ikes”. As we were standing outside the cabin a bald eagle swooped down to catch a fish in the clear waters of the lake. Even closer a bluebird went from branch to branch. Virtually surrounded on all sides by parks and reserves, sightings of wildlife are fairly common here. A wood chuck was a most recent resident. Raccoons, herons egrets, wood ducks, foxes and coyotes also live here.

Paul Erdmann, the conservation chair, began the tour in the lodge with an overview of the Ikes. Their mission dovetails perfectly with ours: “To conserve, maintain, protect, and restore the soil, forest, water, and other natural resources of the United States and other lands; to promote means and opportunities for the education of the public with respect to such resources and their enjoyment and wholesome utilization.” The grounds have been lovingly maintained by a succession of conservators who fight the good fight against invasives and safeguard all the many natives located on the property.

The grounds host a diverse variety of habitats from lakeshore to woodland, small ponds and marshy areas. As we walked the trails a hummingbird zipped about on its quest for insects and nectar. Along with help from the Scouts, the Ikes have installed and maintain bluebird houses, wood duck boxes, bat houses, bee nesting sites and a chimney for Chimney Swifts. The Ikes have also installed raingardens to collect the runoff from the two buildings on the property; they work to eliminate leafy spurge, buckthorn, reed canary grass and other invasives. They judiciously edit the trees that were not part of the original landscape. We saw patches of wild ginger, Sprengel’s Sedge, Penn Sedge, Little Bluestem, Golden Alexander, Blue Flag Iris, and the rare and unusual Bastard Toad Flax.

The restoration events will continue this summer with work on the shoreline of Bush Lake. With a recent drop in water level, there is a gap between the old and the new shoreline that is relatively bare. This is where the Ikes and volunteers will be planting 1,000 plugs of natives. To learn more about the Bush Lake Ikes go to bushlakeikes.org

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.



Featured Native Plant: Grey Headed Coneflower

Common Names: Prairie Coneflower, Yellow Coneflower, Pinnate Prairie Coneflower

Scientific Name: *Ratibida pinnata*

Family: Sunflower (Asteraceae)

IDENTIFICATION

Habitat: Common in prairies, edges of dry woods and along RR tracks

Height: 3 - 5 feet



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Leaves: The alternate leaves vary along the stem. At the base of the plant large leaves are found on long stalks and are pinnately compound, having 1 to 4 pairs of lance-shaped, toothed leaflets opposite each other with a single leaf at the tip. These leaves can be up to 7 inches long. The upper leaves are smaller and may be undivided. The leaves are coarse feeling due to the presence of stiff hairs.

Flowers: A single flower appears at the end of a long stalk with up to 12 flower heads on a plant. The central disc is thimble-shaped and is about 1 " long. This disc is light green or grey at the onset, turning a darker brown as it ages. Surrounding the disc are up to 15 yellow drooping petals. Blooming time typically is from July through September.

Fruit: The seeds heads give off an anise scent when crushed. The seeds themselves are small with no fluff. They ripen in the fall (usually October - November).

Overall characteristics: This plant has a woody, rhizomal root. The stems are also hairy. "Pinnata" refers to the pinnate leaves and comes from the Latin word meaning "featherlike".

GARDEN TIPS

Plant Hardiness: Zone: 3-9

Sun/Shade Needs: Full sun to partial shade.

Soil Needs: Well-drained soil.

Planting: Plant 1 to 2 feet apart. Spreads 1 to 2 feet. Because the plant consists of fairly thin stems it is best if it is planted relatively close and massed.

Propagation: This plant is relatively easy to grow from seed by direct sowing in the spring or fall. The seeds can be harvested by allowing the seed head to dry on the plant, then cutting the seedhead off and rubbing the seeds off the cone. Cold, moist stratification for 30 to 45 days improves germination.

Care: This plant can tolerate drought as well as heat. May need staking or other support.

Companion Plants: Per Prairie Moon Nursery: Good with Anise Hysop, Wild Bergamot and prairie grasses

Friends & Foes: Birds eat the seeds, insects extract nectar from the flower, bees collect pollen and some beetles also feed on its pollen.

NOTES

Current Use/Interest: This plant is currently not considered to have any medicinal uses nor is it eaten.

Historic Use/Interest: The root was used to treat toothaches. Tea was made from the cones and leaves.

Brown Thumb

I first started tackling the conversion of my urban space into a native plant habitat in 2006. Not only was this area a blank page on which I could write, but also I must confess my mind was much in the same condition - almost completely clueless. Although I had some thoughts on general types of potentially desirable garden areas (butterfly, rain garden, prairie, etc.), I had no real concept of what plants should go where in any kind of coherent design. My plan was to dig up my entire back yard that summer and cover it with newspaper and mulch until the following spring; think about what to plant over the winter; and then add these plants in the spring. Fortunately, or unfortunately, I got a windfall of free natives from a plant rescue area that fall; so willy, nilly I planted what I was able to dig up.

Now seven years later I have reached a point where I have a thriving population of plants and have also recently completed what should have been the number one task when first starting out all of those years ago - that is all of my hardscape is finally in. I have established paths through the vegetation; added brick or stone borders; fenced in certain areas with an “artistic” fence; put in a small pond and patio area; and gained and lost some trees. The completion of the hardscape now allows me to review what is growing throughout my garden areas.



Small pond/patio area in my back yard

Everything that I planted has established itself with only a few original plants not surviving and others bursting forth everywhere. In the loss column are two of my favorite plants: cardinal flower and sneezeweed. I have concluded that the former was not meant for conditions in my domain. It needs moist, wet soil and is short-lived. Although this year may perhaps have been an exception, there are no micro-climates in my yard that would fulfill this plant’s desires. On the other hand the sneezeweed was probably the victim of critters that roam my yard - mainly my dog - who seemed to love to run over this plant, breaking its stems. I think it finally just gave up the effort and quit trying to survive in my violent environment. Now the dog has been banned from running free range in the yard (more because of her propensity to eat any and everything that is lying out there than the her inadvertent destructive impulses). So I plan to replant this species again next year.

As for those natives that are running rampant, I now feel that I am in a position to decide what and where I would like to encourage growth. In this category I place Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), Canadian anemone (*Anemone canadensis*) and white goblet aster (*Aster lateriflorus*). In addition to this, I think it is high time to take an overall look at all my garden areas. My plan is to draw an overall plan of our property, with the existing hardscape and the currant plants all in place; spend the winter hours deciding what I like and what I really want to alter (this would include an evaluation of each species’ impact on wildlife); and then redraw the new gardens of my dreams. So stay tuned - next spring I will let you know what I have concluded and how my spaces may be altered.

CoChair’s Message - Marilyn Jones/Vicki Bonk

Are we finally beginning to understand that our future is dependent on our relationship with Nature? This season the monarchs are writing that message clearly and nailing a note to our door. Fortunately Wild Ones are already aware of ecology issues. We must continue and perhaps double our efforts to inform, educate, build habitat gardens, and support biodiversity (and the planet Earth) in every way possible.

Plant natives, pull weeds, listen, learn, do good deeds.
Give the powerful an ear full,
Do what it takes without lull -
Til the danger recedes.

From: Marilyn Jones, Co-Chair

Odds and Ends

Monarch Festival Invitation to Wild Ones Members

A celebration of Minnesota's state butterfly will flutter to Lake Nokomis on Saturday, Sept. 7, 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. For additional information go to (www.monarchfestival.org). “Recent news reports on the dramatic decline in monarchs at their over wintering site in Mexico gives sense to just how important working to save the endangered migration has become.” (Taken from this website)

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 butterfly 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).



Monarch Caterpillar - photo by Vicki Bonk

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 ybonk@usiwireless.com. Or call the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association at 612/724-5256 or visit www.nokomiseast.org.

2013 Officers

Co-Presidents: Marilyn Jones & Vicki Bonk

Secretary: Becky Wardell-Gaertner

Treasurer: Elaine Larson

Board Members

Annual Conference: Julia Vanatta

Audio Visual: John Arthur

Hospitality: Rose Meyer

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Nokomis Naturescape: Vicki Bonk

Outreach: Marty Rice & Sydney Campbell

Programs: Carmen Simonet

Public Relations: Marilynn Torkelson

Tours: Marilynn Torkelson

Volunteer Coordinator: Bill Blood

Website: Heather Holm

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.
- 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, 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.wildones.org
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Twin Cities Chapter

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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