

November 2012 Volume 10, Issue 4

Twin Cities Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

Upcoming Events/Monthly Meetings

SPRING DESIGN WITH NATURE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Reading Our Landscape

Wild Ones 2013 Design With Nature Conference Saturday, March 2, 2013 8:00am: Registration and exhibits 8:45am to 4:30pm: Program including lunch. Plymouth Creek Center; Plymouth, Minnesota http://www.designwithnatureconference.org



Landscapes tell us stories. Reading a landscape connects us to that place. We understand the richness of nature and history embedded there. Stone, soil and seasons, water and weather begin the story. Layers of life—from soil organisms and fungi, to plant, animal, and human populations—provide the actors. These elements weave into food webs, communities, and an ecosystem. "Interpreting this reading matter, in place, on the land, seeing living things in their total environment, is an adventure...(in) ecology."* In learning to read these stories we become better designers and stewards of our landscapes.

*Reading the Landscape of America, May Theilgaard Watts (1957)

Keynote speaker: **Darrel Morrison**, landscape architect, educator, and author. Professor Morrison is a pioneer in using native plant communities as models for the design of gardens and landscapes.

Conference speakers: **Dawn Pape**, environmental educator, author, and photographer; **Bonnie Harper-Lore**, restoration ecologist, educator, author; and **Diane Hilscher**, landscape architect and ecologist.

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

Tuesday, November 20, 2012. Annual Membership Meeting, Potluck, Seed Exchange and Officer Election. +++ Speaker. This is our final meeting for 2012. One in which we typically gather, share food and native seeds and participate in election of our new officers for 2013. If....:

- A. you have the time and inclination, please bring a dish to share.
- B. this is not possible, of course the sharing of your company is quite sufficient.
- C. you have seeds to share, please label them. We'll provide envelopes so people can help themselves.

As part of the meeting Josh Richardson of Prairie Restoration will share information on establishing a native plant from seed.

Winter 2012. Presentations for the upcoming monthly meetings have not been finalized. Please visit our website to find information on what will be presented as the meeting dates approach. For those without an internet connection, please contact Marilyn Jones (518-928-7819) or Carmen Simonet (651-699-3029).

Meeting Notes

September 2012: Minnesota, Caught in the Middle, Bonnie Harper-Lore author, educator, and native plant restorationist.

According to Bonnie Harper-Lore, if one cares about plants then one needs to get rid of invasive weeds. As part of this effort you should know what is coming at us from elsewhere. We are constantly hearing about species other than plants that are also invading and affecting plant life - the ash borer, gypsy moth, and Japanese beetle to name a few. Of these, take the ash borer - the ash is a tree that accounts for 30% of the trees in this state. The ash borer was accidentally introduced into Michigan in 2002. By 2009 there was a confirmed sighting in St. Paul, Minnesota. This shows just how quickly an invasive can spread. Right now,

given the prospects of controlling this invasive, one needs to think about what else to plant in its stead.

The term invasive was formally defined in Executive Order 13112, dated 3 February 1999. It is "any alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health". Further, per Bonnie Harper-Lore, an invasive plant is an introduced species from another country or another region that becomes aggressive. A given example was the Sahara mustard plant which was brought into California about 100 years ago for use as a great ground cover in orchards. Over time it moved out of those areas into the surrounding desserts where it flourished. Now it's most significant harmful affect is the fact that it is tender for wild fires.



continued...

To assist in grasping the risk, invasives were ranked by NATURESERVE (a non-profit corporation that connects science with conservation made up of 82 natural heritage programs). Using scientific methods this organization ranked an excess of 3000 invasive plants into high, medium or low threat. Criteria for classification included distribution impact, control difficulty, reproduction capability, and invasions elsewhere within the country. Some of the high threat species in our area include: Russian Olive, Reed Canarygrass, English Ivy, privets, honeysuckles, black locust, crown vetch, and purple loosestrife.



Common Teasel (from plants.usda.gov)

Next Bonnie Harper-Lore reviewed how invasives get here...:

1. Accidentally: Agricultural seeds, tourism, recreation, transportation, ballast water, and packing materials are a few pathways.

2. Purposefully (as problem solvers): Forage, erosion control, windbreaks, crops, and beautification (as turfs, groundcovers, shrubs, trees, vines, forbs and grasses) are common uses.

...And why we should care:

1. Agriculture: Invasives threaten crops, lower property values, degrade wildlife habitat, and decrease pollinators. She noted that a \$120,000,000 crop production decline in this country could be attributed to invasives. 2. Environment: Invasives reduce biodiversity, increase extinctions, damage benchmark areas (by crowding out those areas where we could learn lessons about how to take care of the land), and cause the loss of ecosystem services (such as wetlands which filter water).

3. Human health threats: Hay fever (caused by Ragweed) was the one invasive that everyone is familiar with. Additionally skin irritation and burns (from Wild Parsnip) and eve

irritations or blindness (due to Giant Hogweed) were also mentioned.

The big question was what invasives were moving our direction? Some examples given were:

- Johnson Grass, which crowds out everything, is coming our way from the east

- Star Thistle, which pushes out forbs thereby threatening range land, originated in California. This plant is currently found now in eastern South Dakota counties.

- Tree of Heaven, which is now found in the northern tier of states in the country, is coming to Minnesota from the east.

- Japanese Stiff Grass, which carpets woodlands, is coming from the east

- Common Teasel started in the north east and moved our direction from there.

- Kudzu has been found in Toronto in 2007. This plant which grows 1 foot/day was introduced in the 1930's as an erosion control mechanism.

- Common Tansy, from the northern United States and Canadian provinces, has already arrived here.

Weeds go hand in glove with a discussion of invasives. These were defined as exotic, alien, non-indigenous, non-native, invasive... Noxious weeds are typically classified by the US Department of Agriculture or a state organization with legal standing. These plants are known to be harmful to agriculture, the



environment or human health. The first state law put in place to protect agriculture was in1795 by Vermont.

Today there are only five states without any protection laws. A local example of a listed plant is the rooted water hyacinth which chokes out waterways. It is currently found in the lower Mississippi in Minnesota. This hyacinth is on the Federal list and also listed in nine states.

Final remarks centered around what one can do in this battle against invasives and weeds

1. Learn to identify these plants.

2. Remove them. Suggested actions included pulling, cutting/mowing, burning, grazing, using herbicides, or practicing biocentrism (a belief that rights and needs of humans are not more important than those of other living things).

- 3. Teach your neighbors.
- 4. Report listed noxious plants to the Department of Natural Resources or the Department of Agriculture.
- 5. Volunteer in actions to remove these plants or to teach about them.
- 6. Do NOT plant these species.

October 2012 Native Bees of Minnesota, Heather Holm.

(Editor's Note: All photos by Heather Holm - great examples of the photos that accompanied this presentation)

Heather's Handy References Books: * Attracting Native Pollinators (Xerxes Society Guide) * Managing Alternative Pollinators (Eric Mader, Marta Spivak & Elaine Evans) * Bee Basics (Beatriz Moisset & Stephan Buchmann (U.S. Forest Services publication) Internet Sources: * www.bugguide.net * www.serxes.org * www.cedarcreek.umn.edu * www.facebook.com/4wasps

This was an excellent overview of bees that may be found here in Minnesota. First came some general information on bees which was followed by specific information on many bees that reside in our state. There are over 4000 species of bees in North America with approximately 250 species of native bees here in Minnesota. Of these, 90% are classified as Solitary, with the remaining 10% as Social. A bee's food sources are pollen which provides protein and nectar which provides carbohydrates. Pollen is taken in by female bees only, while nectar is used by both male and female bees. From the perspective of morphology there are Short Tongued Bees (such as Mining & Halictid Bees), which feed on open flowers like Asters, and Long Tongued Bees (such as Carpenter, Bumble, Leafcutter, Mason Bees) which feed on complex flowers like Penstemon. It was

interesting to note the distance that bees fly varies. Large bees (such as Bumble Bees) go a mile or so; medium-sized bees (such as Leaf Cutter or Mining Bees) fly 400 to 500 yards; and small bees (such as Sweat or Carpenter Bees) travel no more than 200 yards. So when you see each of these bees in your yard you have some idea how close they might reside. Finally the nesting habitat of bees was touched upon. Approximately 70% nest in the ground in areas where the soil is bare or sparsely vegetated. Typically the soil is well drained and sandy, although they are also found in loose loamy soil. Nests vary from a single short tunnel to complex, branching tunnels. Females apply a waxy or oily substance on cell walls to keep excess water & bacteria out. The remaining 30% create or use tunnels in stems twigs or logs; abandoned beetle burrows (snags); or old potter wasp or mud dauber nests. Cavities are dry, warm and offer protection from predators. The tunnels are divided with leaf pieces, leaf pulp, resin, or mud to create cells.

Next the various families (and genus within each) which are found in Minnesota were briefly discussed.

Family Andrenidae

1. MINING BEES (*Andrena* spp.) Found from March to the end of May, and again from Aug to September.

General Information: Ground nesting (lawns). Small to medium sized. Moderately hairy with stripes or pale hair on the abdomen. Most common species are in found in the spring, Many nest in large aggregations **Native Plants Visited:** Bloodroot, Golden Alexander, Toothwort, Wild Plum, Bellwort, False Solomon's

Seal, Sweet Cicely, American Bladdernut, Canada Anemone, Black Chokeberry, Asters, Goldenrods, Boneset

Family Apidae

1. BUMBLE BEES (Bombus spp.)

a. Common Species in MN: Bombus bimaculatus, Bombus auricomis, Bombus impatiens, Bombus griseocollis Bombus fervidus

b. Species Frequently Found in MN: Bombus ternarius, Bombus perplexus, Bombus rufocinctus, Bombus citrinus (Cuckoo Bee), Bombus vagans, Bombus ashtoni, Bombus insularis, Bombus borealis, Bombus sandersoni

c. Species Rarely Found in MN: *Bombus affinis* Rusty Patched Bumble Bee, *Bombus pensylvanicus, Bombus terricola* (Source: Elaine Evans, UMN)

Native Plants Visited: Wild Lupine, Prairie Smoke, Wild Bergamot, Joe Pye Weed, Penstemon, Spiderwort, Virginia Waterleaf, Anise Hyssop, Bush Honeysuckle, Culver's Root, Wild Geranium, Cup Plant, Indigo, Gentian, Larkspur

2. SMALL CARPENTER BEES (*Ceratina* **spp.**) Found from March through July.

Bumble Bee feeding on a Prairie Smoke

General Information: Cavity nesting. Small sized. Sparsely

haired. They are shiny, black, blue, or green with white or yellow markings on the face.

Native Plants Visited: Wild Geranium, Bluestar, Hepatica, Virginia Waterleaf, Spiderwort, Harebell,

Prairie Phlox, Beardtongue, Prairie Coreopsis, Wild Petunia, Butterfly Milkweed, Lead Plant

3. CUCKOO BEES (*Nomada* spp.) Found March through May.

General Information: Cleptoparasites of Mining and Sweat Bees. Small to medium sized. They are black or red with thick antennae. No pollen carrying structures. They fly low to the ground looking for ground nests to lay their eggs in. Female lays 2-4 eggs alongside the one egg in host cell. Once the first Nomada larva emerges, it destroys the host egg and its sibling's eggs. Nomada larvae develop and consume the host bee bread.

Native Plants Visited: American Bladdernut, Spring Beauty, Wild Geranium, Fleabane

4. CUCKOO BEES (*Triepeolus* spp.) Found July to September.

General Information: Cleptoparasites of Long Horned bees. Small to medium sized. They are black with white or yellow markings. No pollen carrying structures.

Native Plants Visited: Cup Plant, Hoary Vervain, Mountain Mint, Goldenrod, Aster, Coneflower

5. LONG HORNED BEES (*Melissodes* spp.) Found June to September.

General Information: Ground nesting. Small to medium sized. Robust and hairy bands of pale hair on the abdomen with hairy rear legs. Males have long antennae.

Native Plants Visited: Gray Headed Coneflower, Canada Tick Trefoil, Spotted Beebalm, Joe Pye Weed, Stiff Goldenrod, Harebell, Coneflowers, Prairie Coreopsis, Hoary Vervain, Wild Bergamot, Cup Plant, Asters

Family Megachilidae

MASON BEES (Osmia spp.) Found from March to the end of May.

General Information: Cavity nesting. Small to medium sized. Round, broad heads. Metallic blue, green or purple. Females carry pollen on the underside of their abdomen.

Native Plants Visited: Wild Geranium, Wild Plum, Wild Lupine, Spiderwort, Virginia Waterleaf, Golden Alexander **LEAFCUTTER BEES** (*Megachile* spp.) Found from June to August.

General Information: Cavity nesting (Pre-existing). Medium to large sized; flattened abdomens with hair bands. Females carry pollen on the underside of their abdomen. They wrap brood cells in leaf or petal pieces, preferring leaves that are smooth on one side. Different shapes are cut for different parts of the cell (oblong versus round).

Native Plants Visited: Coneflowers, Butterfly Milkweed, Great St. John's Wort, Canada Tick Trefoil, Gray Headed Coneflower, Wild Bergamot, Anise Hyssop, Culver's Root, Nodding & Prairie Onion, Hoary Vervain, Cup Plant

CUCKOO BEES (Coelioxys spp.) Found from June to August.

General Information:: Cleptoparasites of Leafcutter Bees. Small to medium sized with a tapered abdomen that ends in a sharp point, which is used to break through Leafcutter brood cells. It has no pollen collecting structures.

Native Plants Visited: Wild Bergamot, Prairie Coreopsis, Butterfly Milkweed, Hoary Vervain, Joe Pye Weed



Leaf Cutter Bee

CARDER BEES (Anthidium spp.) Found from May to July.

General Information: Ground nesting in pre-existing cavities. Small to medium sized. Black with a pattern of yellow or white bands. Hair on the underside of the abdomen. Females collect plant hairs from leaves which are used to line brood cells. Females have 5 sharp teeth on each mandible. They use pieces of mulch to close the nests.

Native Plants Visited: Beardtongue, Coneflowers, Wild Bergamot, Spiderwort (hairs)

Family Halictidae

SMALL SWEAT BEES (Lasioglossum spp.) Found from March to July.

General Information: Ground nesting. There is a small-sized band of hair at the base of each abdominal segment. Its color is dusky black, dull green or blue. Per their name they are attracted to sweat. Native Plants Visited: Hepatica, Bloodroot, Red Baneberry, Bellwort, Wild Geranium, Bishop's Cap, Prairie Smoke, American Pasqueflower, Virginia Waterleaf, False Solomon's Seal, Harebell, Spotted Beebalm, Cicely

GREEN SWEAT BEES (Agapostemon spp.) Found from June to August.

General Information: Ground nesting. Medium sized; short tongued; bright green with black and vellow striped abdomen.

Native Plants Visited: Harebell, Great St. John's Wort, Hoary Vervain, Culver's Root, Spiderwort, Coneflowers, Wild Bergamot, Cup Plant

CUCKOO BEES (Sphecodes spp.) Found from late May to June.

General Information: Cleptoparasites of Sweat Bees. Small to medium sized. Black with a dark red abdomen. No pollen collecting structures.

False Solomon's Seal, Harebell, Spotted
What We Can Do To Promote Bee Survivability

Provide a wide variety of native plants.
Leave areas of bare soil for nests.
Install cavity nesting blocks or hollow stem nests.
Leave standing trees sags.
Don't use pesticides.
Leave/protect rodent holes (such as voles).
Look for bees nests in your lawn before mowing.
Replace lawn with native plants.
Use native plants not those bred (which can cause loss of fragrance, nectar, pollen, and/or accessability.

Talk to your neighbors about bee importance. What We Can Do To Promote Bee Survivability
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continued...

SWEAT BEES (Halictus spp.) Found from June to August.

General Information: Ground nesting. Small to medium sized with a band of pale hair on the end of each abdominal segment. They are attracted to sweat.

Native Plants Visited: Brown Eyed Susan, Common Boneset, Asters, Golden Alexander, Canada Anemone, Tall Meadow Rue, Culver's Root

Family Colletidae

YELLOW FACED BEES (Hylaeus spp.) Found from June to September.

General Information: Cavity nesting. Tunnels are made of wood. Small sized, hairless, and black with yellow markings on the face, thorax and legs. Females carry pollen and nectar in their stomachs. **Native Plants Visited:** Golden Alexander, Canada Anemone, Sw. Milkweed, Culver's Root, Lead Plant, Common Boneset

President's Message

Although the monarchs are well on their way to the Mexican mountains. We Wild Ones will not let down our focus on efforts to "bring back the monarchs." WO National has developed a task force which is rapidly generating ideas for chapters regarding monarch habitat. Vicky Bonk and the Twin Cities chapter will be creating habitat packs to distribute at the 2013 Monarch Festival; Julia Vanatta has an idea for the State Fair; just to mention a few.

So go into your yard or ask permission from others and HARVEST MILKWEED SEEDS. Monarchs like all native milkweed. Put your seeds in a paper bag and write the plant name on the bag.....one plant type per bag. (You can bring them to our November meeting.) Never take all the pods as about half should be left to germinate in that garden next spring. Keep them in a cool dry place and watch/listen for a call for seeds. I think some fun projects will germinate in the minds of Wild Ones and together we will bring back the monarchs.



Milkweed seeds (photo by Vicki Bonk)

Nokomis Naturescape 2012 Growing Season

THANK YOU WILD ONES VOLUNTEERS!

Time to let ourselves and the prairie gardens rest for the year. There were drier conditions than usual this year. Relief when the rain came to offer some assurance that our new plantings can survive the winter. We planted a couple of hundred plants including a variety of milkweeds, asters, goldenrods, grasses, penstemons, and liatris. We continue to select native plants that can tolerate dry conditions. For the first time this year, we gained access to a fire hydrant and were able to run hoses to the Hillside Garden. A

Special call-out to Marilyn Jones, who went above and beyond to water the hillside. No easy task working on an incline and this year's lack of rain kept us busy.

At the Lakeside garden, we made major headway knocking back the aggressive yet often appreciated Early Sunflower. Wild Ones member, Roxanne Stuhr, a professional native plant landscaper helped direct our efforts.

Preparing the Naturescape to look it's best for the Minneapolis Monarch Festival is always a push but the volunteer gardeners got it together again. Thanks go the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association's outreach and

watering assistance, Naturescape Gardeneers (includes Wild Ones), and the Minneapolis Park Board's help through the Conservation Corp. The 2012 Minneapolis Monarch Festival (visit monarchfestival.com) was a resounding success with an attendance of an estimated 10,000 people of all ages and diverse backgrounds enjoying a sunny day at the Nokomis Naturescape. The festival is a unique opportunity to highlight the benefits of native plants. Wild Ones shared the Habitat Tent with the Naturescape, Monarch Joint Venture,

benefits of native plants. Wild Ones shared the Habit The Nokomis Naturescape (NN) is a 4-acre native planting, providing a model of sustainable landscaping. NN is an official Monarch Waystation and National Wildlife Federation Backyard Habitat site located on Lake Nokomis in Minneapolis at 50th St. and Nokomis Parkway. NN is part of the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board system. To volunteer or receive event emails, contact Vicki Bonk at 612-727-3562 or vbonk@usiwireless.com

2012 Monarch Festival

Audubon Minneapolis and Master Gardeners. Our purpose is to offer festival attendees information on native plant gardening and habitat conservation. Our role is crucial since there is a continued loss of critical habitat. We all can make a difference for the better by planting natives in our yards and advocating habitat preservation. Next year we hope to strengthen our mission. We welcome you to join our efforts with your ideas and caring energy.

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.



Seeds For Education

"Get them while they're young" is the idea behind the Seeds for Education (SFE) program started by Wild Ones in 1996 to honor Lorrie Otto. Wild Ones Twin Cities is among the chapters and members supporting the program through fall birthday present donations for Lorrie. Three schools in the Twin Cities area have gone through the application process and won grants to purchase seeds or seedlings to establish native plant areas on their grounds.

SFE provides small grants to encourage young people's interest in native plants and involve them in hands-on projects. Their efforts establish on-going areas for the study of the benefits of using native plants in landscapes around their schools and communities. Wild Ones encourages young people's initiative in the application process.



Kris Martinka helping with planting at Dowling School. 2011 SFE grant winner

At the AFSA (Academy for Sciences and Agriculture) charter high school in Vadnais Heights students in one of the science classes completed the application and received the award at a meeting of the FFA at their school. It was clear that the students felt pride in the result of their efforts. A year later another class filled out the one-year report.

The New School in Minneapolis received an SFE grant in 2011 and used it to double the size of the Monarch Meadow they had started in 2009. Their report states: "In science classes students observe the plants in the garden and make scientific illustrations. They used the garden spaces to set pit traps for insects to examine the variety of species for which the garden is habitat."

At the Dowling Urban Environmental School Wild Ones members have followed up the original project by donating plants and guidance for elementary students to grow native plants in a bed along the outside of the school. The children enthusiastically learn how to dig and water a planting hole, remove the plug from the container, place it in the hole, firm the soil around the plant, and water it. Along with this comes interesting information about the native they have chosen to plant together with encouragement to check their plants the next spring.

The last two issues of the Wild Ones Journal contain great articles on the SFE program. If you know of any projects that could benefit from a small grant and/or some guidance, get in touch with Kris Martinka. Interested in working with children through this program? Give Kris a call.

<u>**Tidbits from the October 7 board meeting.**</u> (Any interest in 1 & 2 below, call the message center.) 1. **Design for Nature Help Wanted.** Our annual conference continues to need volunteers.

2. Board Chair Assistance. Starting in 2013 all board chairs will be seeking volunteers to assist them in

their jobs. So if any of you have any interest in helping out with any of the board areas, please give a call! 3. **Monthly Meetings.** A free WO membership will be given away at each monthly meeting. Ask friends to join you!!

2012 Officers

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

Board Members 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



T win Cities Chapter c/o Marty Rice 4730 Park Commons Dr. #321 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