



Twin Cities Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

August 2019 Volume 17, Issue 3

Part I: Beyond the Scenery, Setting the Stage for 2020s

What needs to be done to assure sustainability of our native plant gardens and Wild Ones Twin Cities?

That's the question our chapter leaders have been revisiting for several years. We are healthy, and as the movement for gardening with native plants continues to grow the need for Wild Ones educational programs has never been more relevant. As a non-profit, educational organization, Wild Ones national and Wild Ones Twin Cities chapter are doing all we can to keep up with the demand.

That's a good thing, right?

When our chapter chartered back in 2001, the leaders built the foundation for Wild Ones to grow in the Twin Cities metro area. Soon we were joined by St Croix Oak Savanna (Stillwater), Northfield Prairie Partners and in the past six years we have split off two new chapters, Prairie Edge (2013) and Big River Big Woods (2015). All of these chapters expand our reach into the greater Minnesota gardening community.

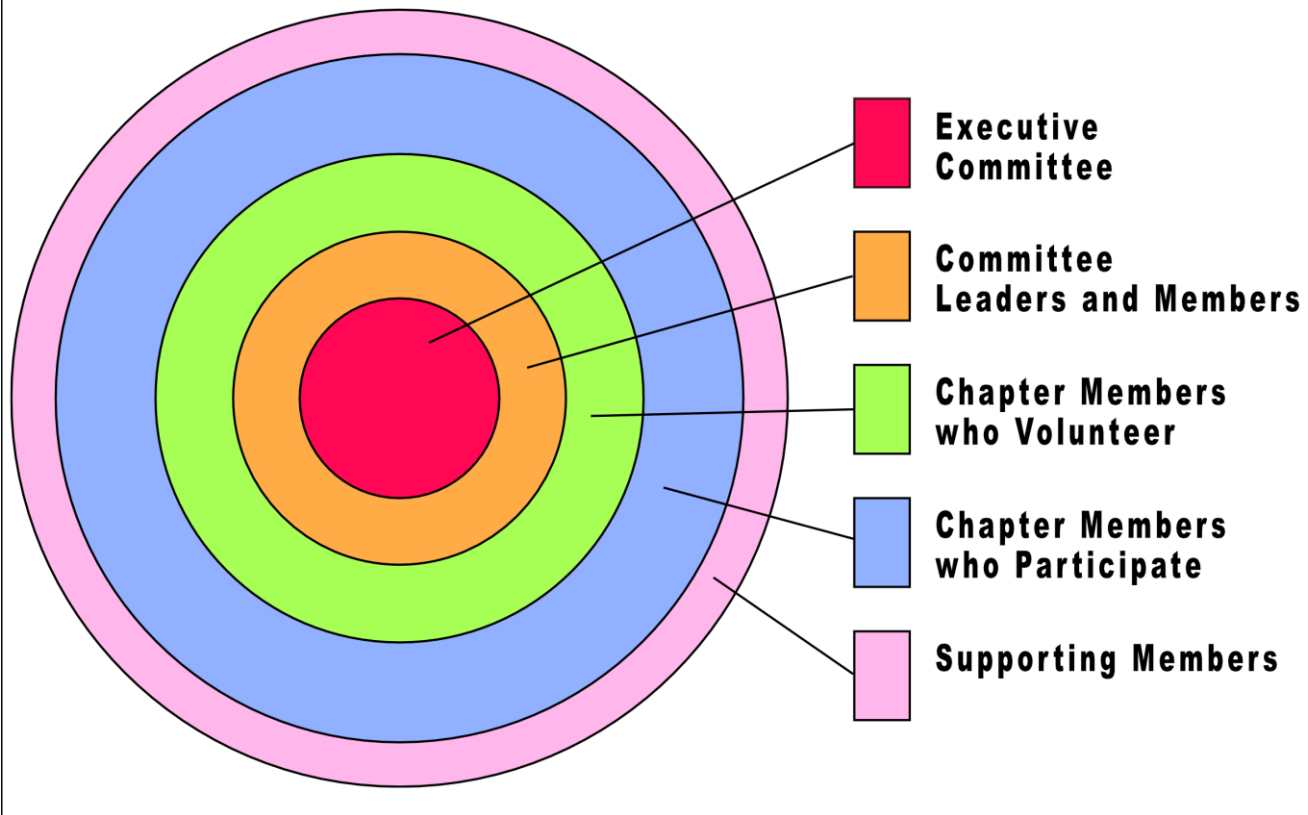
How do we maintain growth and keep passion alive without volunteer burnout? That's the tricky part. As an all-volunteer organization, our leaders each give of their personal time to perform all the duties of managing chapters. We've taken a step back from pursuing any new ideas in 2019 to review our structure and be sure we can maintain our current activities.

Steps we are taking to achieve our goals: In June we met with a professional consultant to gain insights into how other non-profit organizations with limited personnel resources manage to deliver strong programs and keep members involved at all levels. We want to learn about how to engage members, regardless of level of experience. To do this we'll be asking for member participation such as: to be greeters at a meeting, to table an event, to serve on a committee or take on a leadership position. Each member who helps makes it easier for leaders to focus on the big picture, sustaining our membership base while continuing to grow and educate the public on the benefits of gardening with native plants.

Part I is already underway! A special focus committee has already met several times to lay the groundwork for restructuring our board of directors, identifying primary committees and outlining the responsibilities of each committee. Our next step is to continue to refine as we also begin the process of filling positions.

Ideally, we would like to have at least 25% of our members participating as leaders, committee members and volunteers. This chart is a simplified example of how that might look.

Wild Ones Twin Cities : Member Involvement



Brief description of groups illustrated above.

- Executive Committee is required by national. Each chapter must elect a President, Co or Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Chair.
- Committee Leaders and Members are those who take on the logistics of managing Educational Programs, Communications, Development and Member Benefits.
- Volunteers are all the cadre of members who show up to help at meetings, table outreach events, help with the annual Design With Nature Conference and any other calls for service in furthering our mission.
- Participants are those who attend our educational programs, inspirational tours and other chapter activities.
- Supporters are members who agree with Wild Ones mission and want to support our efforts through their membership. Some of our supporters are retirees who helped build our chapter during its infancy.

Where do you fit in? That's another good question. We would very much like all of our members to be involved to some degree. Our November newsletter will outline many of the opportunities for growth and member involvement. We are thrilled to have such a passionate group of leaders taking the time to strengthen our chapter so we can continue to help educate members of our communities on the values of native plants.

A big shout-out and thank you to everyone who has supported our chapter, especially all those who have served and or currently serve in a leadership role.

Upcoming Events/Monthly Meetings

NOTE SAVE THE DATE: The Design with Nature Conference will be held on:
Saturday, February 29, 2020 — University of St. Thomas, St. Paul Campus

SUMMER TOURS

Join our summer tours (or help with our outreach efforts)!! To help inspire you below our photos from Kathleen Seal's garden tour on Sunday, August 4, and our outreach table, partnering with MN Valley Wildlife refuge at Richfield Farmer's Market on Saturday, August 3.



Wild Ones members, with Kathleen Seal, showcasing her gardens



Moira Olson, staffing a table at local market.

AUGUST 14, 6 to 8 pm: Walking tour of the Corcoran Pollinator Gardens

AUGUST 17, 10 am to 1 pm, Bush Lake Isaak Walton League: Twin Cities Chapter members are invited to a private tour at their beautiful property on Bush Lake. Bring your own lunch and enjoy a view of August wild flowers along the shore of this natural gem within the Twin Cities Metro.

SEPTEMBER 14: Member only field trip, partnering with Prairie Enthusiasts, to prairie restoration at Frontenac State Park

MONTHLY MEETINGS *(Meetings are 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, September 17, 2019: America's Flyways: Challenges and Opportunities, Don Arnosti, Executive Director, Isaac Walton League. Living in the Twin Cities near one of the world's greatest migration corridors – the Mississippi Flyway – offers residents wonderful opportunities to observe birds throughout the metro, including their own backyards. The Twin Cities, perched near the top of this amazing bird funnel, brings an annual “river of birds” from South and Central America, the Caribbean, and more, right to our backdoor. But climate change and dwindling habitat are imperiling both migratory and non-migratory birds. Learn what these challenges are and what can be done to help birds not only in your own back yards, but the greater community as well.

Tuesday, October 15, 2019: Tools for Finding and Exploring the rich Natural World of the Twin Cities, John Moriarity, Senior Manager of Wildlife. Novices and long-time naturalists alike will enjoy viewing the visual journey of the Twin City region's significant patchwork of remaining native and restored habitats including prairies, woods and wetlands. The beautiful photography in this presentation illuminates 20 places within an hour of the Metropolitan Twin Cities area where you can see a wide variety of native plants and wildlife. Hear John's expert insight on how to discover and explore the rich natural world of the Twin Cities.

Tuesday, November 19th, Membership Meeting: Join us for the annual membership meeting and potluck dinner, and help shape the future of our chapter.

The Ubiquitous Ants

Ants are a very prevalent insect in the world – Antarctica is the only continent lacking indigenous ants. They thrive in most ecosystems and may form 15 to 25% of the terrestrial biomass – about the same as humans. There are approximately 1 million ants for every human on earth, and possibly 22,000 species of ants worldwide. Minnesota has an estimated 118 species. So, if you have ants in your yard – and possibly your house – you are not alone.



I have a lot of ants in my yard, and I decided that the only way I could embrace the anthills dotting the landscape was if I looked at ants as a science project. They are something to observe, admire, try to identify, and in general just to figure out what they are doing. Along the way, I discovered that ants provide a lot of good services for plants, insects, the soil, and other animals (including people!)

Four common species of ants identified in my Minneapolis yard:

- Silky field ant (*Formica subsericea*): This is the most common ant east of the Rocky Mountains. They are mostly black and fairly large – up to .4 inches in length.
- Pavement ant (*Tetramorium* sp. E), formerly known as *T. caespitum*): About half the size of the field ant, these ants are opportunistic feeders and will eat about anything. They are credited with keeping the sidewalks in New York City relatively free of food trash. In the spring, when you observe ants swarming near the cracks and edges of sidewalks, you are likely seeing two different nests fighting for territory. They are not native to North America but have become one of the most common ants.
- Little black ant (*Monomorium minimum*): As the name implies, these are small – less than .1” in length. A lot of their diet is honeydew from aphids, which they farm to provide it.



Formica subsericea

- Odorous house ant (*Tapinoma sessile*): Slightly bigger than the little black ant, these ants also feed on honeydew from aphids and will gladly feed on sugary food left out by humans. They are called “odorous” because when crushed, they smell good, often described as coconut.

Some services ants provide:

- Ants do an excellent job of acting as little rototillers and aerating the soil. Their tunneling brings soil from below the surface to the top. In this regard they do as well as earthworms.
- Eating pests that predate on plants: Many plants produce an attractant nectar that brings ants which patrol the plants and disturb herbivores and seed-eating insects. They also eat the grubs of many species of beetles which do great damage to trees and other plants.
- Caterpillars of some butterflies produce honeydew to attract ants, which may even carry them into their nests to complete development.
- Ants, ant eggs, and larvae are consumed as food by many animals, and in some countries are consumed as a delicacy. In the summer in Minnesota, black bears eat such a large volume of ants that up to 58% of the scat volume may be ants.
- Seed dispersal: Ants collect the seeds of some types of woodland spring wildflowers, feed the coating to their larvae, and then “plant” the seed in their waste heap. Dutchman’s breeches, trout lilies, and most varieties of violets take advantage of this service.

Interesting facts about ants:

- Foraging ants travel distances of up to 700 feet from their nests – about twice the length of a football field! Distances are measured with an internal pedometer that keeps count of the steps taken, and directions are measured using the position of the sun.
- Poison dart frogs feed mainly on ants, and the toxins in their skins may come from ants.
- Interactive teaching has been observed in ants – a trait usually only seen in mammals.
- Queens of some species can live for up to 30 years, and colonies may contain millions of individuals.

A short list of good resources on ants:

- Antweb.org
- Handel, Steven N. and Kauzinger, Christina M. K., “Ants aren’t your enemy: If you think these little insects are pests, think again”. Fine Gardening, issue 130.
- Hainze, John. “The Buddha in the Pavement Ant”, Nature Underfoot: Tread Lightly, June 14, 2019
- Spicer Rice, Eleanor and Dunn, Rob. Dr. Eleanor’s Book of Common Ants, with photos by Alex Wild. University of Chicago Press, 2017.
- Wikipedia contributors. (2019, June 27). Ant. In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Retrieved 15:35, July 6, 2019, from <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ant&oldid=903656182>

Epilogue: The silky field ant nest in my yard is about 5 feet in diameter and 6 inches deep. Maybe I could borrow a black bear from the zoo – or an anteater?

Submitted by: Susan Tertell

Brown Thumb – Beyond the Monarch

Of all the insects that wander into my yard, butterflies are the ones that interest me the most. Many of the species that enter this tiny territory, I have also encountered nearby in the middle of the Twin Cities along the banks of the Mississippi River. Like many of you I have put in plants taken from butterfly garden suggestions in order to lure more into this patch. As I faithfully planted common milkweed for the benefit of Monarchs, I began to wonder what were the personnel favorites of other species that are found in my neighborhood. Were the other natives I was planting in my “butterfly garden” (blazing star, butterfly weed, aster, swamp milkweed, nodding onion, showy goldenrod, pale purple coneflower, Joe Pye weed, golden Alexander) really attracting and nourishing the species that were nearest to me?

Here’s what I discovered about some of the winged (and crawling caterpillar stage) butterflies that range near me (shown in the order of most visited by combined with most like to have around):

1. **Eastern Tiger Swallowtail:** (My second most frequent visitor) The caterpillar stage of this butterfly feeds on the leaves of a number of native trees such as the birch, ash, and tulip, which are already in my yard. No wonder they are around! They also like wild cherry and cottonwood. As for the adults they seek out the nectar of a variety plants. In addition to wild cherry they also feed on bee balm, honey suckle, clover and thistles.



2. **Mourning Cloak:** One of my true favorites as it over winters here and is the first butterfly to appear in the spring. A sign that winter may truly have departed! The caterpillar of this butterfly can be found on absolutely no trees that I have in my yard thanks to me recent loss of four elm trees; however, one tree that I am definitely considering to replace this loss is the hackberry - so that further seals this as a tree I want to acquire. Beyond that, trees commonly found along the river such as willows, cottonwoods, and aspen explain why I see so many during my daily walks. As for adults I am afraid I can’t do a lot to satisfy them plant-wise as they prefer tree sap with the nectar of an occasional flower (blue star was one that was noted as a favorite), Perhaps my compost heap will satisfy then as rotting fruit is also something they will sample.



3. **Fritillaries.** I am going to glump the wide range of fritillaries together because many of them seem to like one native that I have and am thinking of acquiring more – violets which are a favorite food of the caterpillar. Adults have more varying tastes:

Variegated Fritillary: The adult food includes butterfly weed, common milkweed, dogbane, red clover, tickseed sunflower, swamp milkweed, and peppermint. **Great Spangled Fritillary:** The adult takes nectar from milkweed, thistles, ironweed, dogbane, bergamot, red clover, Joe Pye weed, and purple coneflower. **Aphrodite Fritillary:** An adult

feeds on the nectar flowers of milkweed. **Meadow Fritillary:** This adult takes nectar from

black-eyed Susan, ox-eyed daisy, dogbane. **Silver-bordered Fritillary:** For an adult its nectar sources are composite flowers such as goldenrod and black-eyed Susan



Plant of the Month – Smooth Oxeye

Common Names: False Sunflower, Yellow Oxeye, Sweet Oxeye

Scientific Name: *Heliopsis helianthoides*

Family: Asteraceae

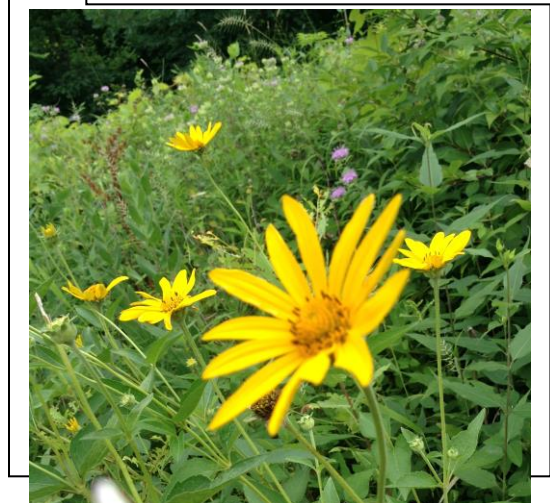
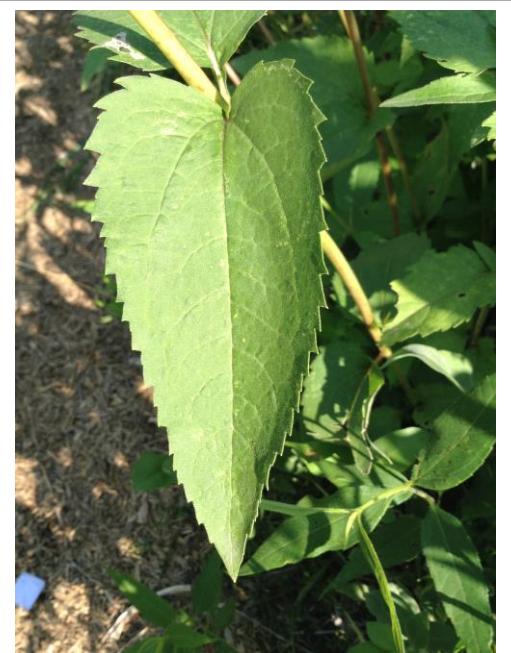
IDENTIFICATION

Habitat: Prairies, edges of woods, thickets

Height: 2 to 6 feet

Leaves: The leaves are opposite, with at least a one-inch stalk, and with sharp coarse teeth on the edges. The shape is narrowly ovate, with a pointed tip and the truncate base abruptly tapering to the stalk. The leaf surface of this variety is rough from short stiff hairs. The upper leaf surface is dark green and the underside paler in color. Size varies from 2½ to 5 inches long and 1 to 3½ inches wide. Each leaf has two prominent lateral veins which become separated from the central vein near the base. The secondary veins form reticulated networks that are visible from the underside.

Flowers: The flower is 1½ to 3½ inches wide and is composed of two types of florets, both fertile. The orange-yellow ray florets number 10 to 18 and are ¾ to 1½ inches long. The central disc is composed of 10 to 75+ disc florets, with yellowish-brown tubular corollas with five pointed lobes that are of a brighter shade of color and are longer than the floret tube. This center exhibits what is known as the Fibonacci sequence. Blooms June through September



Fruit: The center disk becomes a head of dry elongated dark seeds, 0.2 inches long, that lack tufts of hair. Seeds require at least 30 days of cold stratification for germination.

Overall characteristics: There are 1 to 15 stalked flowers on a single plant. It grows in clumps. The stems are light green to reddish green and are variably hairy. The easiest way to identify this plant is by the bracts: look for the alternating long and short bracts. The name comes from the Greek word helios which means sun and opsis

GARDEN TIPS

Plant Hardiness: Zone: 3-8

Sun/Shade Needs: Sun to partial sun preferred.

Soil Needs: Average, dry to medium well-drained soil.

Planting: Plant 12 inches apart.

Propagation: Easy to cultivate

Care: Can remove spent flowers to extend blooming period. Can also cut back early in the season to reduce height. Taller plants may need some staking. This plant can tolerate drought but does best if watered.

Companion Plants:

Friends & Foes: The nectar and pollen attract a wide range of bees, butterflies, moths and birds. There are no serious insect or disease problems.



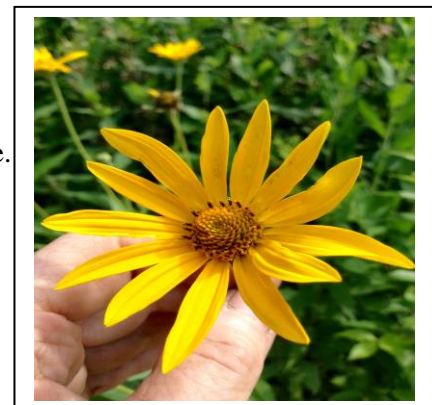
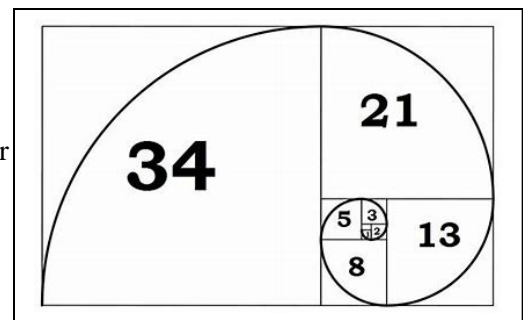
Fibonacci Sequence

Leonardo of Pisa (Leonardo Pisano Bonacci) was born around 1175 A.D. and died in 1240. He contributed to mathematics through his book *Liber Acaci*. In this he:

1. Introduced the Hindu-Arabic numbering system into Europe, replacing the Roman numeral system.
2. Introduced the 10-digit numbering system.
3. Described a series now known as Fibonacci numbers which was named after him in 1970.

Fibonacci numbers are a series of numbers where the next number in the sequence is achieved by adding the two previous numbers together:

1. So: (0, 1, 1 (1+0), 2 (1+1), 3 (2+1), 5 (3+2), 8 (5+3), 13 (8+5), 21 (13+8), 34 (21+13), etc.)
2. When these numbers are plotted out a spiral is formed
3. Also note that if you take any two consecutive numbers and divide the larger one by the smaller one the result is always close to 1.618.
4. The Fibonacci numbers are also known as the Golden Ratio and is important in geometry, architecture and nature. When following this ratio the resulting form is pleasing to the eye.
5. Examples of this in nature include
 - a. Pine cone scales
 - b. Disk flowers
 - c. Nautilus and snail shells
 - d. Plants having spiraling leaves (called phyllotasy), makes it not only pleasing to the eye but also functional by allowing maximum exposure to the light.



Nokomis Naturescape (NN) News

A four-acre native planting at Lake Nokomis
50th Street and Nokomis Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55417

Join The Naturescape Volunteer Gardeners

“Encouraging People to Connect with Nature by Growing Native Plant Gardens”

WILD ONE’S NATURESCAPE GARDENING

for wonder-filled, purposeful, volunteering lakeside!

Interested in hands-on native plant gardening experience? Consider gardening alongside volunteers who have been at it for years! Value native plant landscapes and want to bring the beautiful benefits to others? Join Wild One’s members gardening at the popular Lake Nokomis park. The NN Gardeneers meet Tuesday evenings, between 5/6 to 7/8pm from May through the end of the growing season (September/October).

Since 2002 Wild Ones Twin Cities chapter has helped maintain the three prairie gardens located at the 4-acre Nokomis Naturescape. These demonstration gardens are designed to encourage people to plant native species to liven up their own yard. Get on our email list for current updates on Naturescape volunteering, garden bloom’s and wildlife, native plant gardening tips and more. For more information contact Vicki at vbong@usiwireless.com or call 612-232-8196. Also check out our facebook site to keep you current with happenings

<https://www.facebook.com/NokomisNaturescape>



Stellar Michigan Lilies in the Lakeside Garden.



A Song Sparrow with a beakful in the Lakeside Garden she calls home.

2019 NN Gardening Update >>> In Short, HELP WANTED!)

Wild Ones Twin Cities has been gardeneering since 2002 and every year presents challenges alongside the gratifying experiences. 2019 has been a very lush year with plant growth getting beyond our capacity to keep up. Other challenges include gardening sessions cancelled due to weather conditions and lower volunteer turn-out. Please help us make the Naturescape a better demonstration garden and prepare for the upcoming Monarch Festival too. Maybe the scheduled Tuesday evenings don’t work for you yet another time would. We can consider another time, adopting a small garden space or a special task that would work for you.

Please feel free to contact Vicki (info above).

11th Annual MINNEAPOLIS MONARCH FESTIVAL

Festival de la Monarca

Saturday, September 7th, 2019 10am to 4pm

Lake Nokomis Naturescape, 49th St and Woodlawn Blvd., Minneapolis, MN

This colorful, heartwarming festival has become a Minnesota favorite. MMF is a bilingual event (<http://www.monarchfestival.org/>) dedicated to monarch conservation while honoring the Minnesota/Mexico monarch migration connection. For the past few years, this celebration has drawn about 10,000 people to the shores of Lake Nokomis and to the Nokomis Naturescape.

Festival participants can learn more about monarchs and habitat first-hand from the experts (U of M Monarch Lab, Wild Ones, Monarch Joint Venture, US Fish and Wildlife, US Forest Service International Program, native plant vendors and many more) share their own monarch experiences and enjoy a day by the lake with music, dance, art, theater, nature activities and food.



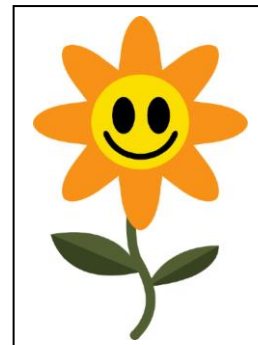
Minneapolis Monarch Festival growing monarch habitat and happy faces.

Now, more than ever, the monarch needs the dedication of native plant advocates, such as Wild Ones, to promote creating and conserving habitat for pollinators. One way to be an answer is to **VOLUNTEER** at the festival.

The NN Gardeneers and Wild Ones will have a Habitat Tent at the uphill festival site. Plus there will be three additional tents at the lakeside gardens including the popular Kid's Nature Treasure Hunt with a free milkweed prize, Monarch Habitat Life Cycle, and and Master Naturalists. You can email volunteer4monarchs@gmail.com and request to put on the Nokomis Naturescape volunteer list. OR visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090D4FA4A82CAAFB6-20192> **THANKS!**



Gardener's To Do List



- * Stay on top of weeding: just a few minutes a day (depending of 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 to 4 inches), leaving some patches of bare earth for native bees to nest.
- * 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.
- * 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 or 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.

2018 Officers

Co-Chairs: Holley Wlodarczyk/Julia Vanatta

Secretary: **OPEN**

Treasurer: Marilyn Jones

President Emeritus : Marty Rice

Board Members

DWN Conference Liaison: Jeremy Mayberg

Audio Visual: John Arthur

Youth Education: Leslie Pilgrim

Lending Library: Barb Gibson/Maureen Fries

Hospitality/Internet Inquiries: **OPEN**

Membership: Joelyn Malone

Merchandise: Erik Rotto

Newsletter: **OPEN**

Nokomis Naturescape/Wild For Monarchs

Liaison: Vicki Bonk

Outreach: **OPEN**

Print Materials: Doug Benson/Holley

Wlodarczyk

Programs: Leslie Pilgrim/Marilyn Jones

Public Relations: Sandra Nussbaum

Tours: **OPEN**

Volunteer Coordinator: **OPEN**

Website: Holley Wlodarczyk/Julia Vanatta

WO Phone : Joelyn Malone

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 meeting, or
2. Call MEMBERSHIP at 612-293-3833, or
3. Access the national website at www.wildones.org



Twin Cities Chapter

c/o Marty Rice

4730 Park Commons Dr. #321

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Chapter Website: www.wildonestwincities.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 and advocacy organization.