



Twin Cities Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

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Announcements

As promised last quarter, our **Membership Directory** is published in this issue of the newsletter. Maybe you're interested in carpooling to a meeting. Or maybe you had a fascinating conversation with another member and want to contact them later. We've listed current members by name, city, zip code, and phone number. The list is sorted by zip code.

WANTED: Before & After Photos

Wild Ones is looking for photos and brief descriptions of yards before and after they were landscaped with native plants. The yards can be all sizes, and they can be in any area (residential, commercial, industrial, park area, etc) and they can be anywhere in the USA and Canada. These photos and brief descriptions will be considered for use in both the Wild Ones Journal and on the Wild Ones website.

Send either electronic files to execdirector@for-wild.org, or mail original photos and narrative to: Wild Ones, Attn: Before & Afters, PO Box 1274, Appleton WI 54912-1274. For questions or further information, e-mail execdirector@for-wild.org or call toll free 877-394-9453.

Upcoming Events

Nokomis Naturescape Hillside Garden

Tuesdays: 5/3 and 5/17

Thursdays: 5/12 and 5/26

6:30 p.m. until dusk

Meet at the NE corner of Lake Nokomis, along 50th St.

Our chapter has an exchange agreement with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board: in return for the use of the community center for our meetings, we help maintain the native plant demonstration site. The Hillside Garden needs the your help now, more than ever (see article later in this issue). It fun, easy work, and companionable to garden with other native plant enthusiasts. Keep the movement growing and come be part of our team one evening. The weather should be lovely this month, the setting is beautiful and gratification is immediate!

Annual Plant Sale & Tour of the Nokomis Naturescape Tuesday, May 17

Nokomis Community Center

6:30 p.m. – Plant sale set up; Bring your labeled plant extra in pots or plastic bags.

7:00 – Sale begins

Prices: \$.50 - \$1.00 (WO members)

\$1.00 - \$2.00 (non-members)

Location: East side parking lot (moved inside if bad weather)

Questions: Call Leslie at 612-872-0123

7:30 – Nokomis Naturescape Tour (free and open to the public)

No formal monthly meetings are scheduled for June or July since we think everyone's busy in their gardens—or hopefully helping at the Naturescape Hillside garden. There will be informal "Garden Crawls" to native gardens during the summer, probably on a Saturday morning or a weekday evening. We'll send out e-mails and post it on our website. Anyone interested in helping plan a "crawl" or two? If so, give me a call: 952-927-6531. —Marty Rice

Our monthly meetings are held at the **Nokomis Community Ctr, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy, Minneapolis**. Doors open at 6:30 pm for socializing and setup, meetings start at 7:00. Check www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities for updates.

Please send items for publication in the next newsletter to the Editor by July 24th..

Notes from the President

By Marty Rice

Sometimes members say it best! With this in mind, following are parts of an e-mail conversation between 2 of our WO members which we think you'll appreciate:

Pamela,

Your communications are always so thoughtful; thanks for taking the time to share; all day today my mind will be poking around in your comments for further nuggets.

Wild Ones to me, is a wonderful organization that works to bring nature back in to the home landscape (or supports those who already have it). Wild Ones offers the inspiring and sensible opportunity and support to have native plants in the home yard and in the community, which by the plants' own nature, invites more nature. Within Wild Ones there seems to be a growing community of people who care about the habitat we live in and share with other life, a community of people who want to learn and share and educate others in this delightful journey of being with nature and native plants at home.

We, as humans, cannot recreate what was here before. The relationships of those plant communities are too complex and we don't even know what they all are anyway. But, we *can* reconstruct a facsimile of the plant communities that were here when Europeans arrived on the scene and that's something many people are trying to do. Others focus on using a few species effectively or on creating a small garden or on evoking a feeling such as you suggest, the reconnection with Nature. There is so much of Earth to repair and protect that there needs to be room in our hearts for all of these efforts.

As I read your email I realized that, in addition to a narrow biological definition, I think of restoration as healing. Our efforts to use native plants strengthens our spirit, enhances our sense of well-being, and increases the beauty and biodiversity of Life all around us.

There is so much disconnection from Nature that I think people have forgotten and don't know with who and how we share this precious planet. And the experience can start right in one's own home yard, community park, shared spaces, and more! I feel a sense of responsibility to reverse some of the damage, some of the "disconnect" humans have done. I need nature and native plants and the life and rocks and water and air that encompass it all. I think many people don't know what they've been missing.

I agree that we are trying to bring Nature back and I see the use of native plants as a kind of "plant it and they will come" effort in that, if the plant species are chosen with care and planted in an effective relationship with one another, the bees, birds, loads, etc. will come (provided there is a source, since they have to come from somewhere.) The (Minneapolis) Star Tribune article on the Gardens of Vicki Bonk and her family reflected just such an effort and I thought it was a great piece about native plants.

Thank you for sharing and being part of Wild Ones!

My Thesaurus lists several words meaning restoration, including return, comeback, reappear, revitalize, replace, and renewal. Your words echo what I believe native plant gardeners are trying to do. Thank you for being so reflective.

Pamela Deerwood

Fran Kiesling

To-Do List for Gardeners: May – July Compiled by Rebecca Chesin

- Start turning your compost pile, if you have the energy...or a helper!
- A little time spent weeding early in the spring while weeds are tender will save you extra work later, when the weather is hotter.
- Spread up to 3-4 inches of wood chip mulch on beds to help conserve water and reduce weeds.
- Keep an eye out for the return of some of your garden's wildlife: dragonflies, caterpillars, and hummingbirds, to name just a few.
- Water any newly planted seedlings during drier periods to help them get well established.
- Cut off dried seed heads of spring blooming flowers. Save seeds for propagating next spring, or direct sow into the ground now.
- Do you remember thinking any of your plants were a bit leggy or just too tall last year? Pinch them back to encourage denser, shorter growth—and with more blooms, too!
- Don't get so busy with your gardening work that you forget to enjoy the beauty of your native plants, while sitting in the shade sipping an iced tea; your back needs the break.

Membership Report

As of the publication of this newsletter, the Twin Cities chapter has **94 members!** Mention our group to other native plant enthusiasts—let's see if we can break into the triple digits before the second half of the year. Feel free to share our web pages and newsletter with others (www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities) so they can join us for one of our scheduled, open events.



Native Plant Expo Feb. 26th

Our 5th Native Plant Expo met with success not only with a great location but we were graced with a beautiful spring day! The attendance was up, new members joined our group and we earned money to support next year's event. The talks were well attended and spurred questions to both the presenters and exhibitors.

The chapter expanded our offerings. Wild ones had three tables for: admission and resource guide of exhibitors, autographed books for sale and city guidelines on boulevard planting, and John Arthur's display of native plants, seeds and photos. Fran Kiesling researched the city guidelines for boulevard plantings. Andre Guirard delivered a wonderful demonstration on making a rain barrel, which was then given away in a drawing from attendees.

This year brought new exhibitors including a book seller of used and new gardening books, nurseries and landscapers. The Expo is a great time to meet and talk with the growers and landscapers before their calendars are filled. Plus many of the exhibitors offered discount coupons for plants and other items. Check the www.for-wild.org website for the Resource Guide.

"Return to Nature: Living Landscapes" Report on Upcoming Wild Ones National Conference

The Conference Planning Committee has been steaming ahead on plans for the weekend of Sept. 9 through Sept. 11, 2005. Bunker Hills Regional Park bordering on Anoka, Andover and Coon Rapids will be the site; it's located on 1,600 acres, with over 5 miles of walking and biking trails.

Friday PM will be registration and an informal gathering. On Saturday, Sept. 10, there will be a choice of 4 concurrent programs for the 4 breakout sessions—2 in the AM and 2 in the PM. A wide variety of topics will be offered, ranging from residential and urban landscaping, to ecological and environmental issues to working with neighborhoods to "go native". Saturday evenings' keynote speaker at the banquet will be Joan Iverson Nassauer, formerly at the Univ. of MN and now Professor of Landscape Architecture at the Univ. of Michigan speaking on "Maintaining the Wild in Metropolis". On Sunday, there will be a choice of hosted tours to some of the many wonderful native sites in the area.

One of the difficult steps in planning this conference has been deciding on topics and speakers as this part of the country is extremely fortunate to have many experienced and dedicated individuals and businesses committed to the native landscaping and environmental issues. It is our hope that this wealth of expertise will be too good to turn down the opportunity to attend this Conference.

As available, updated information including and registration form will be posted on the Wild Ones website at www.for-wild.org as well as in the July/August issue of the WO Journal. In the meantime, mark your calendars as this will be a most enjoyable and enriching weekend.

Nokomis Naturescape Hillside Garden 2005 By Vicki Bonk

The Nokomis Naturescape hillside garden has gone through many permutations since it's initial 1998 planting. Every year brings a different garden. This is a delightful aspect of a native plant garden. Sometimes though, the changes are ones the gardener needs to address from a maintenance standpoint. At the hillside garden, we had the unwanted guests of turf grass, quack grass and Canada goldenrod. We also had the premature departures of a number of plants we had hoped to establish. What happened? A variety of potential reasons and we're still assessing the full situation.

As part of our revision plan, a variety of native shrubs were installed last fall, to serve as a demonstration site and to act as a border to the oak savanna hillside directly north. The species planted include gray dogwood, white snowberry, eastern wahoo, American hazelnut, coralberry, and nannyberry. A border of prairie dropseed was also installed.

This spring, the gardening coordinators met to discuss the garden's performance and devise plans for this year's growing season. Here is what we noted:

- The shrubs and dropseed installation look good.
- The area under the large maple has spring plants coming back well—especially Virginia bluebells, wild geranium and spiderwort. We may plant more bluebells for greater impact.
- There are two large areas of turf grass. We decided to use the paper/mulch method to get rid of the turf and serve as a demonstration of non-herbicide.
- We will plant a number of natives this year. We agreed on fewer species to start with, more signage, plants for the up hill situation that can withstand dryer situations, and more shorter grasses. A list was created from previous meetings with the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board horticulturist, Mary Lerman and Eric Olsen from Tennant Landscaping.
- There are areas showing regrowth of Canada Goldenrod and quack grass. We will need to coordinate with MPRB to eliminate these invasives, and these areas will need new plantings.
- On Earth Day, the Nokomis East Environmental Task Force members cut down dead growth, papered/mulched a turf area and mulched other bare spots.

We formulated the following gardening strategies for going forward:

- The Wild Ones will be responsible for maintaining the hillside. Kris Martinka will rally the gardeners.
- We'll meet for gardening on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays and 2nd & 4th Thursdays.
- Packets of gardening info will be handed out to gardeners including native plant id, weed id, garden schedule.
- We will take digital photos of plants throughout the growing season and put together a reference guide.
- We will call a meeting soon to plan a native planting. Some funds are available for plans and planning. We hope to enlist the help of volunteers for the actual planting to save money and to help educate on native plant installations.

To truly be a successful native plant demonstration site, the Hillside Garden needs the care of more volunteer gardeners. And we need help now, this year, more than ever. And it is good work, we're grateful to get it and need to keep the movement growing. Come be part of our team whenever you can. It's fun, a beautiful setting and gratification is immediate!

To volunteer, or for more information, contact Kris Martinka 612-822-2061.



2005 Officers

President: Marty Rice
Vice President: Karen Graham
Secretary: Kris Martinka
Treasurer: Jim Martinka
Newsletter, Website: Rebecca Chesin
Publicity: Susan Damon
Hospitality: Rose Meyer

Open positions:

Want to get more involved in Wild Ones? Any offers to help in the following areas for the balance of 2005 would be greatly appreciated. It can be lots of fun and we can tailor the time involved with how much you can spare. Give Marty Rice a call at 952-927-6531 if you'd like further info:

- Membership Chair
- "Show me / Help Me" Program
- Mentoring Program – this is a relatively new program with established and simple guidelines.
- Summer "Garden Crawl" tours (Fun and informal; we can recommend lots of sites to visit.)
- Plant Rescues
- Program Chair (Just a few open programs left to schedule for the balance of 2005.)