

Upcoming Events

Garden Crawl

Saturday, August 12, 9:30–11:30 a.m.

Meet at 9:30 at 5240 Beard Avenue South, Minneapolis

Free and open to the public

This is an informal tour of a variety of front yard gardens all of which use natives to some degree: rain, bog, steep slope, and shade gardens; gardens composed from 100% native plants to ones with just a smattering of natives, all within about an 8 block perimeter so you can walk, bike, or drive. Talk to the owners and see/hear their gardens stories. Bring your friends and neighbors. Our goal is to show how natives can be used in a variety of ways in front yards. Call Marty Rice at 952-927-6531 if any questions.

Parade of Community Gardens

Saturday, August 19, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Green Institute, 2801 21st Avenue South, Suite 110, Minneapolis

Participating gardens throughout the metro area will open up their gates to the public. As part of this, Midtown Greenway coalition will have representatives at each of their rain gardens along the Greenway corridor. There will be a Wild Ones bike-led tour of the Greenway tentatively scheduled for 10:00 a.m. starting at the Green Institute parking lot. Contact Mary Schommer at rmschommer@hotmail.com or 612-729-5274 if you are interested so she can get a head count. Additional information will be relayed as it becomes available.

Design Ideas to Shrink your Lawn

Tuesday, September 19, 6:30/7:00 p.m.

Nokomis Community Ctr, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy, Mpls

Free and open to the public

A colorful slideshow and talk by Evelyn J. Hadden, author of *Apprentice to a Garden* and editor of LessLawn.com and LessLawn Press. Explore the possibilities of less lawn. Come and see color photos of secret gardens, tea gardens, xeriscaped boulevards, tree islands, and welcome gardens. Learn different techniques for designing lawns out of your landscape, including:

- Where to start if you and your family are uncertain
- Where to site outdoor "rooms" and what they get you
- Native plants and other low-maintenance elements
- Plantings that solve problems and provide services
- Many models for lawn-free landscapes

Across the country, people are gaining variety, year-round interest, birds and butterflies, and relief from the routines of mowing and watering. Let their landscapes inspire you!

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*Upcoming Events, continued***Show Me - Tell You****Tuesday, October 17, 6:30/7:00 p.m.****Nokomis Community Center, 2401 East Minnehaha Pkwy, Minneapolis****Free and open to the public**

A sharing session of our own gardening.

We hold monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of the month which are typically presentations on topics relating to native plant gardening/landscaping. Tours or field trips are substituted June through August; in February or March is our Spring Expo.; and in December we take a break. In addition, from May-September we offer hands-on participation at the Nokomis Naturescape. Check for updates at www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities.

Message from the Presidents

As more and more natives are revealing their plumage, I hope you are all able to sit back a bit and enjoy the fruits of your labors which kept your gardens in shape! I know that we as co-presidents of this chapter are doing so with regard to our thriving organization. This thought spurs us on to pause for a moment and thank the laborers in our chapter garden who have helped make it continue to blossom. Not sure that we will remember all of the points at which people have stepped up, but will give it a try and hope that you will forgive us if we fail in making the list complete. First to all the chapter board members who through their efforts not only in the area they have assumed responsibility, but also for providing great ideas and discussions at meetings and via email. Special appreciation to the folks who have volunteered to help out at various events throughout the year - the Spring Expo; manning the Wild Ones' booth at other venues; the Science Museum grant project; and the Nokomis Naturescape (at which all but one of the 12 Wild Ones' garden plots have someone to tend them). Last but not least to all members who by the simple act of joining this organization have contributed to its viability. Without all of you we would not be flourishing as we are today.

We want to also take the time to congratulate our own Marty Rice who was just elected to the Wild Ones National Board. We know she will bring great energy to her new role in the organization and are looking forward to her enthusiastic espousal of ideas that she gleans from working with others from around the country.

Finally, we are starting a new regular feature with this edition of the newsletter, which will introduce a Wild Ones chapter member in each publication. We hope this will give you a sense of the diversity of folks that are part of our organization and their varying activities. This will be in a question/answer type format. Hope you enjoy this addition to the newsletter. Let us know!

Kris Martinka & Mary Schommer, Co-Presidents

Announcements

Wild Ones Awards First Ecoscaper Certification

Congratulations to our member Marty Rice for being the first person to complete Level I of the Wild Ones' Ecoscaper Program! Marty successfully completed field work and a written test on native plants to qualify for this designation. The Ecoscaper Certification Program provides opportunities to enhance members' knowledge about landscaping in harmony with nature and apply that knowledge as an advocate for native plants and natural landscaping in the member's neighborhood/community. Visit the Wild Ones' website at www.for-wild.org for more details about the program and how you too can take part.

New Membership Benefit

Have you seen the new online group for members to discuss native plants? Ask questions, invite advice on your dilemmas, share your experiences, post pictures and more! Recent conversations have discussed rain gardens, french drains, and characteristics of various native and invasive plants. Visit this URL to join: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wildonesnativeplants/>



Laptop Projector Needed

Many speakers have wonderful presentations to illustrate their talks, though most lack a projector. We would like to be able to offer this option as part of providing with the in native topics. If our members best coverage plant-related you have a source for a projector or your company would like to donate one to us in support of our mission please contact Mary Schommer at 612-729-5274.



Member Spotlight: James Wellman

Occupation: Retired. Last job prior to retirement: University Professor in the Chicago area in plant science.

Highlight: In May/June 2006 Channel 11's Minnesota Bound did a program on Beaver Creek Valley State Park, part of which featured Wild Ones member James Wellman.

Length of Wild Ones involvement: 2 years

Q: What led to your inclusion in this program?

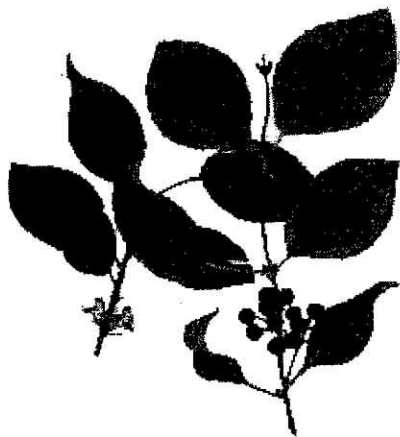
A: My wife, Lori, and I are really big on hiking state park trails. In September 2005 we did so in Beaver Creek Valley State Park, one of the smaller parks in the Minnesota system. The park, located in the SE corner of the state, apparently was acquired pretty



Continued on next page

Member Spotlight, continued

much as virgin land (never cultivated). We came away thinking it was a jewel of a park in part due to the diversity of native plants we found throughout the area - shade tolerant plants, sun-loving species, you name it. We were most impressed while hiking the predominantly wooded, mile long, Hole in the Rock Trail. At the far end of this path we came out of the woods into an open meadow area (at least 5 acres in size) that in our minds was the most gorgeous native prairie that we had ever seen at a state park. It contained a large diversity of native plants with no exotics. This hiking track then lead to another trail that went up to the top of a steep hillside. Here numerous 5-foot high, stacks of buckthorn, cut by park staff, were piled. It seemed as if a great effort to control the invasion of buckthorn in the park was being made. Upon returning home we contacted Roger Heimgartner, park superintendent, to tell him how impressed we were with the park and the work they were doing. He related how this meadow area had gone from mostly weeds to its present state. The previous winter with the help of a youth group similar to the old WPA program (*Editor's note: probably the Minnesota Conservation Corps*) they had done a controlled burn there. It was phenomenal what had come from that single burn effort. He also said they intended to burn the buckthorn area in early 2006. Both Lori and I were struck by the superintendent's enthusiasm, the ongoing park maintenance/improvement efforts; and the use of the youth for the job; and offered to donate a sum for the burn effort. Concurrent with this Channel 11 was looking to do a story on a DNR state park. Beaver Creek Valley State Park was recommended because of the upcoming burn, my donation and the magnetic personality of the park superintendent. Thus, as part of the program which featured the burn, I was interviewed at my home. The final product had a bit on my park enthusiasm and monetary contribution as well as our back yard prairie garden.



Q: So you weren't able to go out and watch the action?

A: Unfortunately neither my wife nor I were able to go down and watch the burn itself. In any case, since we were not going to be allowed to get close because of liability concerns, it probably was not a bad thing to be otherwise committed at that time. But we did get a video, so we could see how it was actually done. (*Editor's note: We hope to be able to show this at one of our monthly programs soon.*)

Q: Any thoughts of doing a burn on the prairie in your back yard?

A: Probably not - I don't think I would be arrested, but there is a lot of rigmarole one has to go through to burn safely and legally.

Q: So what do you do to control your prairie area?

A: I go out early in the spring and cut off a great deal with a pair of hedge clippers, then use this for compost. Unfortunately over 5 and more years of growth, native grasses (especially little blue stem and prairie drop seed) develop a thick, extremely tough, thatch-like mound. A burn would remove a lot more of this. In the past I have used a saw used for cutting tree branches to cut off some of this thick mound. This is very labor intensive. Not sure, but it might help to start using those hedge clippers the third year or so after planting to keep that growth done down.

Q: One final question - what inspired you to join Wild Ones?

A: As part of a U of MN Extension class for adults I was touring their research center at Cedar Creek. In the course of a side conversation I heard about the upcoming national WO conference that was being held locally (September 2005). I was looking for further ways to become involved with natives and decided to join.

Nokomis NatureScape

Every Tuesday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Wild Ones volunteers maintain the hillside garden area of the Nokomis Naturescape (50th Street east of Nokomis Parkway on the east side of the lake) in exchange for our use of space at Nokomis Community Center. The garden is split up and volunteers may adopt a certain area.

There is still one lonely area looking for someone to give it personal attention. We have a good time and with the work divided up it goes along easily. Anyone interested? If you want to just come and help you are welcome to do that without adopting that last spot.

The hillside garden is looking beautiful. We get compliments from passers-by each week. There are many new plants and plants from previous years are looking healthy.

Questions? Contact Lisa McDonough lisa@scanman.mine.nu or 612-721-1361.

August–October Gardeners' To-Do List

- 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.
- If you plan to gather seeds to share with others or start more plants for yourself, watch seed heads for readiness to harvest.
- Clip off seed heads before they ripen on plants that are too "exuberant" in your garden.
- The cooler temperatures of autumn are a great time to add plants. Keep watered to help them establish well before winter.
- Take pictures (and notes) to aid in winter planning for next year—and for our 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 to 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.
- Replenish mulch, as needed (2-4 inches).

Summer's flying by but don't let it fly past before taking photos of your favorite plant combos or other enjoyable garden spots. When those cold, gray winter days hit you'll cherish those lovely blooms, and they can be help you in figuring out what to do with your garden next spring. Also, at our year's wind up meeting in November, it might be fun to share your favorite garden photos.