

*Promoting Native  
Plants for Natural  
Landscapes.*

Inside this Issue:

President's Message	2
In My Yard	2
April Meeting Recap	3
30th Anniversary Events	4
Watershed Restoration	4
Membership	5
Chapter Contact Information	6



Follow us on Facebook  
and Instagram

[www.facebook.com/wildonesrockrivervalley](http://www.facebook.com/wildonesrockrivervalley)

[@wild-ones-rrvc](https://www.instagram.com/wild-ones-rrvc)



Scan with your  
Smartphone for more  
information about  
Rock River Valley  
Wild Ones

[www.wildonesrrvc.org](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org)

All articles for the  
June 2024 newsletter, must  
be submitted to:

[wildonesrockrivervalley@  
gmail.com](mailto:wildonesrockrivervalley@gmail.com)

by May 20, 2024.

## IMPACT OF BISON ON THE PRAIRIE ECOLOGY OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS

Thursday, May 16, 2024

6:00 pm - Social Time | 6:30 pm - Program

Cherry Valley Library  
755 East State Street,  
Cherry Valley, IL

Zoom: <http://wildonesrrvc.org/>

*Pre-registration for Zoom is required. See  
website for details.*



**Dr. Elizabeth Bach**

Dr. Elizabeth Bach will talk about the long-term plant community monitoring at Nachusa Grasslands as well as research coming out from the first several years with bison. Ecosystem restoration provides potential to reverse losses in biodiversity and ecosystem functioning. Long-term monitoring is essential to understand if restoration projects deliver on this potential. In this talk, Dr. Bach will present long-term, multi-trophic data collected across the 35-year history of the Nachusa Grasslands preserve near Dixon, Illinois.

Dr. Bach is the Research Scientist at The Nature Conservancy's Nachusa Grasslands where she works with scientists, land managers, and volunteer stewards to investigate questions about tallgrass prairie restoration ecology. Her own research expertise focuses on soil ecology, exploring how below ground biology supports tallgrass prairie ecosystems through plant-soil interactions and nutrient and carbon cycling.

*This program is free and open to the public. Participants can attend in person at the Cherry Valley Public Library or attend via Zoom with prior registration found on our website at <http://wildonesrrvc.org/>. Call Jerry Paulson, 815-222-4414 for more information.*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT **Jerry Paulson**



**Jerry Paulson**

April showers bring May's flowers, and our May wildflower sale is in full swing with hundreds of orders coming in and thousands of native plants being delivered. The native plant sale is our largest fundraiser for the

chapter, helping to fund our speakers, newsletter, social media, local grants, and sponsored events like the Natural Landscaping Workshop held at Severson Dells Nature Center last month that WORRV co-sponsored. We provided landscape guides produced by the National Wild Ones and packets of wildflower seeds to grow. All of this



**Photo by Severson Dells Staff**

work is done by our loyal, hard-working volunteers.

If you volunteered to help at the native plant sale, **Thank You!** We also need volunteers for the annual plant sale table at the Klehm Arboretum Garden Fair on June 8 & 9 and for our upcoming events celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Chapter. We have a series of events planned to highlight the work our chapter—one of the first in the nation—has done to save the world in our own backyards by promoting natural landscaping and the use of native plants during the past 30 years:

**July 20, 9 am to 1 pm - Founders Celebration and Member Picnic** with tours of Jarrett Prairie, Byron Forest Preserve, 7993 N. River Rd., Byron.

**October 19, 9 am to 12 noon - 30th Anniversary Reception** with national staff, history displays, local partner displays, and featured speaker Benjamin Vogt, author of *A New Garden Ethic* at NIU Conference Center, 8500 E. State St., Rockford. \$5 fee for members; \$10 for non-members.

**November 21, 6 pm to 8 pm - Annual meeting** honoring long-time members, dinner and seed share, location TBD.

If you are able to help at one of these special events, please contact Linda Ricker at (217) 649.3966, or email her at [greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com](mailto:greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com).

## IN MY YARD **Jane Evans**

What a great showy species cup plant is! Growing at the back of our small prairie garden to about 8' tall, *Silphium perfoliatum* is a real eye-catcher. Butterflies love the flowers and birds equally love the seeds. The leaf axles store water after rain that is used by bees, butterflies, adult fireflies, and birds. One jogger remarked that he loved jogging past our garden, and that the previous day a whole flock of birds had erupted from it. We gave a cup plant start to a friend who never grown one before, and it soon became one of her favorite plants. As they spread to make a nice clump, all you really need is one or two plants to start. Pictured are bumblebees working our cup plants.



**Photo by Jane Evans**



## APRIL MEETING RECAP: WILD FERNS OF ILLINOIS Jerry Paulson

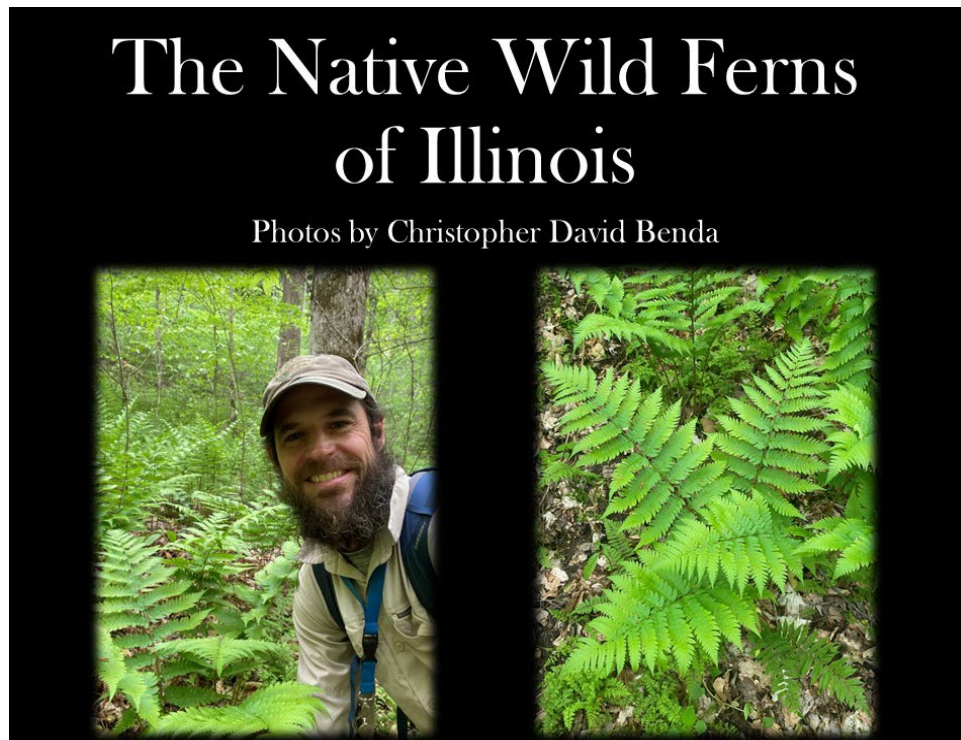
More than 50 people gathered in-person and on-line to learn about the native ferns that can be found in Illinois from Christopher D. Benda. Benda is a botanist who lives in southern Illinois. He coordinates the Plants of Concern Southern Illinois Program for the Chicago Botanic Garden, conducts rare plant surveys for the Shawnee National Forest, and teaches The Flora of Southern Illinois at Southern Illinois University. He shares his extensive collection of plant photos on his website, [illinoisbotanizer.com](http://illinoisbotanizer.com).

He started his presentation with an introduction to basic fern terminology, and some reference books to use to identify ferns in the wild. He suggested Robert Mohlenbrock's *The Illustrated Flora of Illinois: Ferns*, second edition as the best guide for ferns in Illinois.

There are 85 taxa of ferns in Illinois (this includes species and varieties) and 30 taxa of Lycophytes--horsetails, clubmosses and quillworts—that are known as fern allies. He went through the ferns by family, sharing his photos, identifying characteristics, habitat and distribution maps for each one. He also pointed out which ferns were suitable for growing in home gardens.

Some of the more beautiful and interesting ferns found in Illinois are the spleenworts that only grow on rock faces; walking fern that grows on moist limestone cliffs in northern Illinois and reproduces by rooting at the tips of its leaves; mosquito fern, an aquatic species that is found in ponds and backwater lakes along the Mississippi River; and bulblet fern that forms small bulbs that fall off the fronds and start new plants. All ferns reproduce by spores that are formed in sori on the fronds or in special fertile fronds. Botanists didn't know how ferns reproduced until 1794 because the spores are so tiny.

Several fern species are very rare or endangered



in Illinois, such as log fern (found only in one place in southern Illinois), filmy fern, a rare species found in the recesses of sandstone cliffs in the southern tip of the state, black-stemmed spleenwort, found in only 5 locations in Illinois, and Goldies fern, one of Chris' favorites that is rare throughout the state (see above).

Other ferns are more common and are found throughout northern Illinois or the whole state, such as sensitive fern, common in marshes and fens in the northern counties, ostrich fern, a native species that is commonly planted in yards and gardens, Christmas fern, an evergreen fern found in piney woods, cinnamon fern and interrupted fern, that often grow together in moist ravines, and maidenhair fern, a lovely, lacey plant that is an excellent species to grow in gardens. The habitat requirements of most ferns are very specific: marsh fern, as the name implies, only grows in wet areas, while purple cliffbreak and common polypody can only be found on limestone cliffs; bracken fern grows commonly in sandy fields and savannas throughout the state forming dense stands.

The full program was recorded and can be found on our website, [www.worrv.com](http://www.worrv.com) in a few weeks. Chris Benda can be reached by email at [botanizer@gmail.com](mailto:botanizer@gmail.com).



**30** years  
of native landscaping.  
Saving the world in  
our own backyards

**This year, Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter turns 30 and we are celebrating with exciting events!**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>JULY</b><br><b>20</b><br>9AM-1 PM    | Founders Celebration & Member Picnic<br><i>Jarrett Prairie Center, 7993 N River Rd, Byron, IL</i>  |
| <b>OCTOBER</b><br><b>19</b><br>9AM-12PM | 30th Anniversary Reception<br>with national staff, history, & partner displays, &<br>Featured speaker Benjamin Vogt<br><i>NIU Rockford   8500 E State St, Rockford, IL</i> |
| <b>NOVEMBER</b><br><b>21</b><br>6PM-8PM | Annual Meeting, Dinner & Seedshare<br><i>Location TBD</i>  |



For more information visit: <https://wildonesrrvc.org>

## GET INVOLVED WITH WATERSHED RESTORATION

Region 1 Planning Council has received Section 319 Grant funding from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to conduct outreach and activities to educate and encourage local watershed stakeholders to adopt nonpoint source (NPS) pollution control best management practices (BMPs). The project includes the construction of two demonstration BMP projects: a bioretention basin in the Spring Creek-Rock Creek Watershed, and a bioswale in the Kent Creek Watershed. These BMPs will help protect water quality in the South Fork Kent Creek, Levings Park Lagoon, Buckbee Creek, and the Rock River.

This project is being conducted in partnership with Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Winnebago County, City of Rockford, Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District,

Rockford Township, Rockford Park District, and Olson Ecological Solutions.

To learn more and sign up to volunteer:  
<https://bit.ly/4a2G32p>

### **Saturday June 1 - Wednesday June 5, 2024** **Ken Rock Planting Installation**

Planting native vegetation at Ken Rock project site. The rain date is Thursday June 6, 2024.

### **Saturday August 24 - Tuesday August 27, 2024** **Park-Er-Woods Planting Installation**

Planting native vegetation at Park-Er-Woods project site. The rain date is Wednesday August 28, 2024.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE **Sallie Krebs, Membership Coordinator**

A membership e-form and our membership brochure describing the benefits of membership are both available on the chapter website ([www.wildonesrrvc.org](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org)). Click on Join/Renew under the Membership tab. You can renew (or join) with any major credit card through PayPal (no PayPal account required) by using our website.

### 201 memberships as of April 23, 2024

#### Special thanks to our members who made contributions above the basic \$40 dues!

Lora Edwards & Michael Simmons, Rockford

Kaelyb Lokrantz, Roscoe

Richard McKnight, Winnebago

John & Barbara Spiritosanto, Rockton

#### Welcome to our new member(s)!

Kaelyb Lokrantz, Roscoe

Richard McKnight, Winnebago

Jackie Whitworth, Rockford

Steven Wright, Beloit

#### Welcome to our returning member(s)!

John & Carol Gerrond, Rockford

Jane Lenser, Cherry Valley

#### Anniversaries:

25 Years:

Ted Ross, Arlington Heights

20 Years:

Cindy Torrisi, Belvidere

It is preferred that renewal memberships be submitted through the Member Center online (<https://members.wildones.org/join/>) rather than by check for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. To renew your Wild Ones membership Log in or contact [support@wildones.org](mailto:support@wildones.org) for more information. Your expiration date is on your chapter newsletter above your name on the label. You will receive several emails from the Wild Ones national organization prior to your expiration date. If you want to join Wild Ones as a new member go to the Member Center. Remember that your dues include membership in both National Wild Ones and our chapter. If you need to mail a check, please use the address below:

WILD ONES

ATTN: Membership

2285 Butte Des Morts Beach Rd

Neenah, WI 54912-1274

### *New Member Special!*

**Thanks to a generous donor, new members receive**

**a Doug Tallamy book while supplies last!**

**New members must pick up their copy of the book at a monthly meeting.**

*We are looking for people to offer their talents and time with the following positions:*

- **President**
- **Treasurer**
- **Booth Coordinator**
- **Plant Sale Volunteers**
- **Show Me, Help Me Coordinator**
- **Plant Rescue Coordinator**
- **Publicity Coordinator**
- **Event Photographer**







ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Cathy Johnson  
2205 S. Perryville Rd. PMB 191  
Rockford, IL, 61108

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## DON'T BECOME EXTINCT!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 05/01/2024, this is your last chapter newsletter and you have received your last Wild Ones Journal until you renew your membership. National Wild Ones drops expired memberships the first week of the expiration month, so please don't be late! See the Membership Update for renewal information.



## WILD ONES 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.

## ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER MEETINGS

Our regular meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month. We are live streaming the programs over ZOOM and posting recordings on YouTube. Links to the meetings and programs are posted on our website and our Facebook page, and sent to members via email the week of the meeting. If you want to receive the link send an email to: [janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com).

## ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER BOARD AND COORDINATORS

### BOARD

*President:* Jerry Paulson  
(815) 222.4414 [paulsonjerry@aol.com](mailto:paulsonjerry@aol.com)  
*Vice President:* Linda Tabb Ricker (217)  
649.3966 [greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com](mailto:greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com)  
*Secretary:* Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865  
[catiohn\\_22@yahoo.com](mailto:catiohn_22@yahoo.com)  
*Treasurer:* Janet Giesen (815) 762.5912  
[janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com)  
*Board members:*  
Kim Lowman Vollmer (815) 397.6044  
[kimlowvol@aol.com](mailto:kimlowvol@aol.com)  
Carrie Meyer (301) 466.8754 [Cmeyer@gmu.edu](mailto:Cmeyer@gmu.edu)  
Gloria Powell [glrpowell610@yahoo.com](mailto:glrpowell610@yahoo.com)

### APPOINTED COORDINATORS

*Booth coordinator:* [open position]  
*Library coordinator:* Ginnie Watson  
(815) 398.0138 [vsatson47@aol.com](mailto:vsatson47@aol.com)

*Membership coordinator:* Sallie Krebs  
[membershipworrvc@gmail.com](mailto:membershipworrvc@gmail.com)  
*Mentor coordinator:* Barb Kober  
[kittykat1951@comcast.net](mailto:kittykat1951@comcast.net)  
*Merchandise coordinator:* Cynthia Chmell  
(815) 969.7435 [cynthiachmell@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiachmell@gmail.com)  
*Native plant sale coordinators:* Janet Giesen  
(as to the left)  
Gloria Powell [glrpowell610@yahoo.com](mailto:glrpowell610@yahoo.com)  
Ginnie Watson (as above)  
Cynthia Nelson [cnelson18@niu.edu](mailto:cnelson18@niu.edu)  
*Newsletter editor and production:*  
Jessie Crow Mermel (815) 955.0653  
[serendipitree@gmail.com](mailto:serendipitree@gmail.com)  
*Newsletter proofreader:* Rebecca Beneditz  
[rebecca.beneditz@gmail.com](mailto:rebecca.beneditz@gmail.com)  
*Plant rescue/seeds coordinator:* Mary Anne  
Mathwich (815) 721.5187 [mprairedock@aol.com](mailto:mprairedock@aol.com)  
*Program coordinators:* Lisa Johnson

(779) 537.8939  
[lejohnson3804@outlook.com](mailto:lejohnson3804@outlook.com)  
Mark Luthin (815) 543.7412  
[m.luthin@comcast.net](mailto:m.luthin@comcast.net)  
Linda Tabb Ricker (as to the left)  
*Publicity coordinator:* Dawn Skupien  
(815) 262.7864 [dawnskupien@gmail.com](mailto:dawnskupien@gmail.com)  
*Show Me/Help Me coordinator:*  
Linda Tabb Ricker (as to the left)  
*Social media coordinator:* Jessie Crow Mermel  
(as to the left)  
*Tree & shrub sale coordinator:* Brian Hale  
(815) 289.2384 [treeandshrubsale@gmail.com](mailto:treeandshrubsale@gmail.com)  
*Volunteer coordinator:* Cynthia Nelson (as to the left)  
*Website coordinator:* Janet Giesen (as to the left)  
*Youth education & grants coordinator:* Kim  
Lowman Vollmer (as to the left)