

**Promoting Native
Plants for Natural
Landscapes.**

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All articles for the
February 2023 newsletter,
must be submitted to:
paulsonjerry@aol.com
by January 21, 2023.

*Sara Dykman:
Bicycling with Butterflies*

Thursday, January 19, 2023

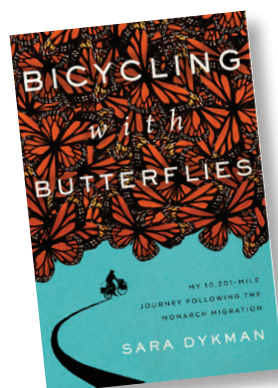
Time: 7:00 p.m. (program)

Zoom: <https://bit.ly/Wild-Ones-Jan-2023>



Sara Dykman

In 2017 Sara Dykman became the first person to bicycle the entire route of the migrating monarch butterfly. She traveled from Mexico to Canada and back on an old mountain bike weighted down with all the supplies she would need for nine months on the road. Along her 10,201-mile route, Dykman gave presentations to people about the monarchs and what people could do to protect the migration. She became a voice for the monarchs. Now her voice has the potential to travel even further, with the launch of her book, *Bicycling with Butterflies*. Part science, part adventure, part love letter to nature, Dykman hopes her book will inspire people to see the beauty of our own backyards and the power each of us has to be part of the solution.



Sara Dykman is the founder of beyondabook.org, which fosters lifelong learners, boundary pushers, explorers, and stewards. She works in amphibian research and as an outdoor educator, guiding young people into nature so they can delight in its complicated brilliance. She hopes her own adventures—walking from Mexico to Canada, canoeing the Missouri River from source to sea, and cycling over 80,000 miles across North and South America (including the monarch migration trip)—will empower young and old to dream big.

This event can be streamed online through the Zoom link above. The video recording of the meeting will be posted on the website shortly after the program. There will be no in-person meeting this month.

Message from the President **Jerry Paulson**



Jerry Paulson

As we start a new year of activities for our chapter, it is nice to recall all the things we did in 2022. When last year started, we were still meeting virtually as the COVID-19 pandemic still raged. The first program was a video interview of Lee Johnson, called A Naturalist's Life, recorded when Lee turned 90. He shared

many memories of lost wild areas and diminishing wildlife while recounting his many adventures while growing up in the Rock River Valley. The interview is a time capsule of the changes in the natural landscape of our area.

In February we had the largest turnout of viewers for the year to hear Ed Cope talk about the Flora and Fauna of Bell Bowl Prairie and Gravel Prairies of Northern Illinois. Before moving to the Pacific Northwest, Ed made detailed studies of these unique prairie communities. His presentation spurred the Board of WRRV to join the fight to Save Bell Bowl Prairie from destruction by the Rockford Airport Board.

March featured native plants for use in Shade Gardens by Erin Garrett, while in April Peggy Doty presented an informative program about the life histories of Illinois Owls: Masters of Illusion and Silence. April also had us participating in the first Pollinator Palooza at Severson Dells Nature Center. Our booth featured planting native wildflowers for bees and butterflies.

May was busy with our annual Native Plant Sale, and our monthly program was presented by Travis Cleveland, who taught us how to use taxonomy keys to identify native trees and shrubs. In June we participated in the annual Garden Fair at Klehm Arboretum. Dr. Doug Stotz gave a virtual lecture about the Effects of Climate Change on Plants and Wildlife. Stotz has collected years of data on birds that he used to show how climate change has affected migration patterns and the timing of such natural events as the budding of trees.

In July the chapter hosted a members' picnic and tour of the prairie plantings on Mark and Joyce Long's farm near Leaf River that WRRV member Ken Kielsmeier has put in over the past decade. Ken showed how federal conservation programs can be used to reduce soil erosion, stop water runoff

and enhance habitat for butterflies, bees, birds, and other wildlife. In August, Jim Kleinwachter showed homeowners how they could do the same thing on a smaller scale through the Conservation@Home program, sponsored by the Conservation Foundation.

We returned to the classroom at Rock Valley College in September with door prizes and an informative program presented by Bob Grese, former director of Nicholas Arboretum at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor about Jens Jensen and O.C. Simonds, pioneers in the use of native plants and natural landscaping in garden design from the early 20th century. Jensen is well known for his park designs in Chicago and Simonds is known for designing the Morton Estate in Lisle, Lowell Park in Dixon, and Sinnissippi Park in Rockford. Later that month our chapter was honored with an Environmental Awareness Award by the Board of the Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District for our educational efforts to promote the use of native plants and our plant sales.

October started with our annual Native Tree and Shrub sale. More than 150 native trees and shrubs were sold to plant in our area. Later in the month, Barbara Williams told us about Bats, Beyond the Myths in October, and shared information about how to help bats in our own yards. In November we held our annual meeting and seed exchange and enjoyed a social time before our program, presented by Rob



Jerry introduces Rob Clark at the November meeting.

Clark, about his year-long effort to visit all 44 forest preserves. Rob shared his beautiful photos and stories about exploring the preserves (see the recap on the following page).

The programs can be seen on YouTube on our website at www.wildonesrrvc.org.

As 2023 begins, we are returning to virtual programs during the winter months due to the high rate of COVID and RSV infections in the area, and to avoid driving during wintry weather. We hope to be able to return to in-person programs at RVC again in the Spring.

Thank you for being a member of Wild Ones and helping to save nature one yard at a time.

44 Winnebago County Forest Preserves in 2022 Jerry Paulson

November Program Recap

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County was approved 100 years ago at the election of November 7, 1922, and the district was organized on November 15th, 1922. Hononegah Forest Preserve, acquired for the price of \$22,000, became the first preserve in 1924. Three more preserves were purchased that year: Laona Heights, Kilbuck Bluffs, and Trailside, a wayside for motorists on U.S. Highway 51 in New Milford.

Today the Forest Preserve District encompasses 44 preserves that total 11,500+ acres, including 3 golf courses, campgrounds, picnic shelters, sports fields, several nature preserves, miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails, fishing lakes, and thousands of acres of natural woodlands, wetlands, prairies and rivers that provide important habitat for our native songbirds, waterfowl, raptors and other fish and wildlife. It also includes Severson Dells Nature Center, Klehm Arboretum and Botanical Gardens, Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, and Macktown Living History Center and historic village.

To celebrate their centennial year, the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County announced a challenge to visit all 44 preserves in 2022. Rob Clark decided to meet the challenge. His personal "rules" were that he had to hike at least a mile or two in each one to claim it as a visit and take enough photos during his hikes that others could share in their natural beauty. Rob shared a selection of his amazing photographs of the forest preserves he visited at our annual meeting on November 17th.

Rob started his challenge at sunset on January 22th looking for owls at Ferguson Preserve near Shirland. During the cold days of January, he visited Macktown, Sugar River Alder and Kishwaukee River Forest Preserves. On February 6th, he encountered a Pileated woodpecker in the white pines at Sugar River Forest Preserve, one of the oldest in the district. During February he photographed the patterns in the trees, snow,

ice and water at four more preserves, including discovering Bobcat tracks at Colored Sands Forest Preserve. On March 8th, he found the springs at Blackhawk Springs, the site of a large Native American village on the Kishwaukee River. Spring arrived on March 20th with skunk cabbage blooming in seeps in Funderburg Forest Preserve where he recorded two Barred owls calling to each other in the woods along Hall Creek. By April 15th tree swallows had returned to Pecatonica Wetlands, and frogs were calling at J. Norman Jensen Forest Preserve.

Rob shared his favorite preserves for May wildflowers: Seward Bluffs, Pecatonica Wetlands, Deer Run and Hononegah. At the end of May he visited the Kishwaukee River Gorge North and South preserves by canoe, exploring the ravines cut by erosion through the bedrock. On June 5th he traveled down the Rock River by canoe to meet a friend for a shore lunch and hike at Atwood Homestead. July included visits to Trask Bridge, Two Rivers, Four Lakes, Oak Ridge, Hinchliff and Indian Hill Preserves. He returned to visit Cedar Cliff preserve on August 13th and 15th to photograph the numerous butterflies and birds in the restored prairies on this scenic site on the Rock River. He ended the month with visits to Roland Olson, Stone Bridge, Ledges and Clayton Andrews

Preserves in Roscoe. He finished the challenge in October with visits to nine for the remaining preserves, ending with Espenscheid Memorial Forest Preserve on October 27th.

Rob Clark recently retired from teaching mathematics for 27 years at Rock Valley College. He has been a volunteer at the Nygren Wetland Preserve for the last 20 years, and Nygren remains one of his favorite places to photograph. He is a member of NLI's Board of Trustees and is also a Board member with Nature at the Confluence, and regularly volunteers with Severson Dells' Canoe Convoys. The video of Rob's program can be seen at: <https://youtu.be/Z2Cd3nBke54>



Rob Clark and Jerry Paulson at Kilbuck Bluffs Forest Preserve.



Blue-eyed Mary flowers at Seward Bluff Forest Preserve.

Toward Harmony with Nature Conference

On Saturday, January 28, 2023, the Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter will be holding its conference "Toward Harmony with Nature" both virtually and in person in Oshkosh, WI.

The conference will feature keynote address will feature Stanley A Temple, Ph.D. speaking on Aldo Leopold, Land Health, and the Resilience of Nature. The feature address is with Jennifer J. Wilhoit, Ph.D., speaking on Native Species and Ecotones: We Can't do Without Them. The conference also features several interesting break-out sessions and exhibits.

Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to members Nikki Seaton and Dawn Skupien for being awarded WORRVC scholarships to attend the Toward Harmony with Nature Conference. Stay tuned for their reflections on the conference.



For more information, visit <https://www.towardharmonywithnature.org>

In My Yard Jane Evans

I love our yard and the life it sustains. It was a chilly day in October and I thought all the bumble bees had died off, but there was one small, hardy soul feeding on a few remaining New England asters. This was just a few days later a solitary monarch stopped by to do some nectaring on the same plant. New England aster (*Symphotrichum novae anglae*) seems to be the last and longest blooming of the native

plants, even outlasting the goldenrods. It also has blooms big enough to provide a landing pad for bigger butterflies, and is a host plant for many types of moths which provide critical food for birds. Easy to grow, preferring part to full sun and medium moisture, this plant can be very prolific. Share extra plants with friends and neighbors to help wildlife, as they can be a lifesaver for late bees and migrating butterflies.



New England asters planted with goldenrod.

"That September pairing of purple and gold is lived reciprocity; its wisdom is that the beauty of one is illuminated by the radiance of the other. Science and art, matter and spirit, indigenous knowledge and Western science - can they be goldenrod and asters for each other? When I am in their presence, their beauty asks me for reciprocity, to be the complementary color, to make something beautiful in response."

- Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Potawatomi scientist, professor, mother and writer.*

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). 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. We appreciate your support!

176 memberships as of January 28, 2023

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

David & Virginia De Swarte, Mount Carroll

Kirby Doyle, Rockford

Diane Kane, Clinton WI

Karen Matz & John Skowronski, DeKalb

Guy Smith, Machesney Park

Dianne & Dennis Stenerson, Rockford

New Members:

Robert Clark, Rockton

Andrew & Kaley Skupien, Roscoe

New members are identified with a green ribbon on their meeting name badges. Please introduce yourself to them and help us welcome all new members to our great chapter!

Anniversaries:

5 Years:

Laura Sjoquist, Rockton

Thank you for your continuing support!

It is preferred that renewal memberships be submitted through the Member Center online

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 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

A portion of all dues paid is returned to the chapter by National Wild Ones to support our chapter activities. National Wild Ones provides liability insurance for our meetings and events. All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.

Please send address and email address changes to the Membership Coordinator: Sallie Krebs
Email: membershipworrvc@gmail.com or call (815) 540-4730 if you have any questions about membership. Wild Ones Annual Memberships: Household \$40,

Limited Income/Full-Time Student \$25,

Affiliate Non-Profit Organization \$90,

Business \$250.



Get more involved with your Wild Ones Chapter!
We are looking for people to offer their talents and time with the following positions:

President (in 2024)
Treasurer
Booth Coordinator

Mentor Coordinator
Board Member-at-Large



NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

ROCK RIVER VALLEY

ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

c/o Sallie Krebs
1643 N. Alpine Rd., Suite 104
PMB 233
Rockford, IL 61107

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Don't become extinct!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 01/1/2023, 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.

Mail your renewal to:
Sallie Krebs
Wild Ones Rock River Valley
7492 Renfro Rd.
Cherry Valley, IL 61016



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.

Rock River Valley Chapter Board and Coordinators

BOARD

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Mentor coordinator: [open position]
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Show Me/Help Me coordinator:
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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)