

*Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.*

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All articles for the June 2023 newsletter, must be submitted to: [serendipitree@gmail.com](mailto:serendipitree@gmail.com) by May 21, 2023.

## *Gardening with Grasses: Native Grasses for the Home Landscape*

**Thursday, May 18, 2023**

**Time: 6:30 p.m.**

**Location: Cherry Valley Library  
755 East State Street,  
Cherry Valley, IL**

**Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81564337259?pwd=Ny9BdTVtMS9zOEc1SFgvrVRIZVE3Zz09>**



**Erin Garrett**

Incorporating grasses into your home garden is nothing new - but what are your options? Come learn more about what these four-season interest plants have to offer, and get some ideas about which native grasses you can choose to incorporate into your landscape.

Erin Garrett is a Natural Resources, Environment, and Energy Educator for University of Illinois Extension serving Alexander, Johnson, Massac, Pulaski, and Union counties. Erin develops and delivers high impact programming to adults and youth to help them develop an appreciation for natural resources and to empower them to make small changes to positively impact the environment. Erin's programming focuses on why homeowners should consider choosing native plants, how to support native pollinators, how to identify grasses, how to identify and manage invasive species, and developing an appreciation for prairie ecosystems.

**NOTICE: May 18th Meeting to Start at 6:30 p.m.** The May 18th meeting and program will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will be both in-person and via Zoom. The meeting will be held at the Cherry Valley Public Library at 755 East State Street, Cherry Valley, IL 61016, located south of U.S. 20 By-pass on the east edge of Cherry Valley. For directions go to [www.cherryvalleylib.org](http://www.cherryvalleylib.org).

We will have a selection of native grasses to buy at the meeting from our native plant sale, so you can try out some of the speaker's recommendations in your own yard. The Cherry Valley Library also has its own prairie planting next to the building to visit before and after the meeting.

## Message from the President Jerry Paulson



**Jerry Paulson**

During the hot spell we had in April the queen bumblebee that was hibernating in my yard emerged and headed straight to the pussy willow blossoms growing next to my house. It was the only plant blooming that early besides the maples, and the queen bee was busy gathering the pollen.

Heather Holmes posted information on her Facebook page about how important native willows are for bees emerging from hibernation:

*"Willows (genus Salix) are keystone plants for two reasons: 1) they are larval host plants for a significant number of butterfly and moth caterpillars and 2) they are host plants for over a dozen pollen specialist native bees (in a given region)...Willows bloom before other plants and offer protein-rich pollen and nectar. Willows are dioecious — they have separate male and female plants but rely on pollination by insects."* (<https://www.facebook.com/PollinatorsNativePlants>)

Prairie willow (*Salix humilis*) is a good choice for home landscapes and can tolerate drier conditions. It is slow growing, compact, and less than 4 feet tall. It grows naturally in dry prairies and does not spread like other willow species. There are many species of willow that are native to our region. Check out the link below to learn more about the willow species native to your county. Some willows are very aggressive or need moist growing conditions so they may not be appropriate for a home landscape <http://bonap.net/Napa/TaxonMaps/Genus/County/Salix>.

It is not too early to be thinking about planting willows in your landscape that will provide early sources of pollen for emerging bumblebee queens. You can order plants through our native tree and shrub sale in the fall by contacting Brian Hale at (815) 289-2384 or [treetandshrubsale@gmail.com](mailto:treetandshrubsale@gmail.com).

Lastly, thank you to Severson Dells Nature Center for hosting Pollinator Palooza on Earth Day and to all of our helpful volunteers and visitors to our Wild Ones booth. Even though it was a chilly day, we had a wonderful time educating the public about the importance of pollinators.

### *Violets by Mary Oliver*

Down by the rumbling creek and the tall trees-  
Where I went truant from school three days a week  
And therefore broke the record-  
There were violets as easy in their lives  
As anything you have ever seen  
Or leaned down to intake the sweet breath of.  
Later, when the necessary houses were built  
They were gone, and who give significance

To their absence.

Oh, violets, you did  
signify, and what  
shall take

Your place?



Photo by Jessie Crow Mermel



Photos by Ginnie Watson

## Our Conservation Partners: Wild Ones Jo Daviess County

The Wild Ones Jo Daviess County Chapter has recently become chartered, and we are pleased to have sent them a donation to help them get started. They plan to use funds for monthly presentations and to participate in local events that support the use of native plants in the community.

Chapter president, Mary Edwards, states that “your donation has really helped us, and we look forward to coming meetings where we continue to use these funds.”

<https://jodaviesscounty.wildones.org/>



Photos provided by Wild Ones Jo Daviess Chapter

## In My Yard Jane Evans

It was one of those near 80-degree days in mid-April. A big, beautiful queen bumblebee was headed toward our twinleaf which resides in the shade of our oak tree. Maybe she was going to provision her nesting chambers with pollen for her baby bees as the plants only produce pollen and no nectar from their blooms.

Twinleaf (*Jeffersonian diphylla*) was named in honor of Thomas Jefferson in 1792, and blooms about the time of his mid-April birthday. His granddaughter noticed how well they were doing in his garden in 1809.

Our plants have also liked their home in the rich, organic soil under our oak tree and although they mature very slowly, have filled in nicely. They like their shady, not-too-dry soil and are about 10” tall. Hard to find, we may or may not have them at the plant sale.



Photo by Jane Evans

# The Ecology of Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers. Jerry Paulson

## April Program Recap



On April 20th, Chris Benda, botanist, and past president of the Illinois Native Plant Society, took us on a photographic tour of the rich variety of common and rare spring ephemeral wildflowers in Illinois. They are called “ephemeral” because the flowers typically only occur for a couple of weeks in

the spring before disappearing for the rest of the year. This strategy allows them to survive under the canopy of trees that produce dense shade when the leaves are fully unfurled.

Chris works as a Researcher at Southern Illinois University, where he coordinates the Plants of Concern Southern Illinois Program and teaches The Flora of Southern Illinois. He is known as

Illinois Botanizer and can be reached by email at [botanizer@gmail.com](mailto:botanizer@gmail.com).

Spring wildflowers employ a myriad of strategies to grow, bloom and reproduce in the shade of trees. True ephemerals bloom, set seed, and wither away before the tree canopy closes while the leaves of other species, like wild ginger, mayapple and Solomon’s seal persist during the whole growing season.

Chris took us through the spring wildflower season sharing his beautiful photos, starting with the earliest harbinger-of-spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*), skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpos foetidus*), spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) and bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) to the later trilliums, mayapple, blue cohosh and Jack-in-the-pulpit. He included many early prairie and wetland wildflowers as well as spring flowering shrubs, like redbud, Juneberry, and the native viburnums. You can enjoy all the photos and learn about their adaptations by looking at the YouTube recording of the program at <http://wildonesrrvc.org/MonthlyMeetings.html>.

## 2023 Native Plant Sale

We are excited to announce that our annual native plant sale is now underway!

We have carefully selected over 55 native plant species for rain gardens, butterfly gardens, pollinator gardens, and to attract insects and birds. The plant sale brochure includes information that will help you select plants for your gardening needs. Knowledgeable volunteers will be available on pickup days to assist you with your purchases and if you have questions. This year we will be offering a limited number of plant species that are not on the brochure and will be available at the public sale dates only.

### Ordering Native Plants

Advance orders were due Friday, April 28. This year we will once again offer a members-only pickup on Thursday, May 11 from 3 to 7 p.m., followed by order pickups and public sales on Friday, May 12



**Pasque flower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris*). Photo by Jessie Crow Mermel**

from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, May 13 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We strongly encourage you to place orders early to improve your chances of getting the plants you want. Quantities are limited and some plants sell out quickly.

Members will receive the plant sale brochure automatically when they become available. Non-members can request to be put on the mailing list to receive the free brochure: [membershipworrvc@gmail.com](mailto:membershipworrvc@gmail.com).

### Pick up Location

The pickup location is 4601 Paulson Rd. (same as Paladin Parkway), Caledonia IL, just off East Riverside Boulevard and I-90 on the east side of Rockford, IL. A map will be in the brochure.

Download brochure here: [http://www.wildonesrrvc.org/2023/3\\_March/2023Plant-Sale-Draft03-05-23\\_rev.pdf](http://www.wildonesrrvc.org/2023/3_March/2023Plant-Sale-Draft03-05-23_rev.pdf)

## *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. We appreciate your support!

### 188 memberships as of April 26, 2023

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

Barbara & Frank Flores, Durand

Lora McClelland & Michael Simmons, Rockford

Deanne Pierson, Rockford

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

Dawn Byrnes, Beloit WI

Jeanine Dabson, Rockford

Katie Engler, Beloit WI

Mary Hatch, Sycamore

Jacklyn Kline, Loves Park

Julie Maffei, Rockford

Lori Marshall, Rockton

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

Barbara & Frank Flores, Durand

*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:

25 Years:

Francie Barnes, Rockford

Kim Risley, Rockford

**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](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

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](mailto: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 05/01/2023, 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](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

[catjohn\\_22@yahoo.com](mailto:catjohn_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)

#### **APPOINTED COORDINATORS**

*Booth coordinator:* [open position]

*Facebook coordinator:* Dawn Skupien

(815) 262.7864 [dawnskupien@gmail.com](mailto:dawnskupien@gmail.com)

*Library coordinator:* Ginnie Watson

(815) 398.0138 [vswatson47@aol.com](mailto:vswatson47@aol.com)

*Membership coordinator:* Sallie Krebs

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

*Mentor coordinator:* [open position]

*Merchandise coordinator:* Cynthia Chmell

(815) 969.7435 [cynthiachmell@gmail.com](mailto:cynthiachmell@gmail.com)

*Native plant sale coordinators:* Janet Giesen (as to the left)

Jane Evans (815) 494.7731

Ginnie Watson (as above)

Cynthia Nelson [cnelson18@niu.edu](mailto:cnelson18@niu.edu)

*Newsletter editor-in-chief:* Jerry Paulson (as to the left)

*Newsletter editor and production:*

Jessie Crow Mermel (815) 955.0653

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

*Plant rescue/seeds coordinator:* Mary Anne

Mathwich (815) 721.5187 [mprairiedock@aol.com](mailto:mprairiedock@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 (as to the left)

*Show Me/Help Me coordinator:*

Linda Tabb Ricker (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)