

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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All articles for the April 2017 newsletter, must be submitted to:
Constance@wildonesrrvc.org
by March 23, 2017.

*Conducting a Woodland Prescribed Burn
Thursday, March 16, 2017*

Location: Rock Valley College
Physical Education Center PEC0110 (lower level)
3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, 61114

Time: 700 p.m.



Russell Brunner will speak to the chapter this month about conducting woodland controlled burns. March is a great time to do controlled burns in our oak woodlands before the spring ephemerals come to life. He will speak to the how's and why's of doing such burns. Controlled burns are just as important in our region's oak ecosystems as they are to our prairies. He will discuss why this is and how to safely go about conducting this vital management tool.

Russell is the Superintendent of Land Management at the Byron Forest Preserve District (BFPD) in Ogle County. He has been with the District since 2003 and has completed over 100 controlled burns. His duties there include invasive species control, prescribed fire, native plantings, and all other aspects of restoring and managing the District's natural areas. He has a degree from Southern Illinois University in geography - environmental planning. He also serves as president of the Prairie Preservation Society of Ogle County, a non-profit that owns and stewards two high quality prairie preserves.

This program is free and open to the public.
For more information, call (815) 332.3343.



Message from the President Constance McCarthy



Constance McCarthy
photo by Tim Lewis

Helping the Chapter and Helping Bees

Spring can't be far off when our chapter's plant sales start ramping up. The brochure and order form for the *woodland sale* are already available in print form and on the chapter's website (distributed by post and via the chapter's Constant Contact emails). If you really want to have your socks knocked off, the online version is in full color

and will inspire newbies and experienced native gardeners alike to stock up on these beauties.

Watch your inbox and/or mailbox for the *prairie sale* brochure, which will be coming very soon.

These two sales (along with the tree and shrub sale, held later in the year) are the main fundraisers for the chapter. Amounts earned from the sales are what allow us to bring in top-caliber speakers, pay for our meeting space at Rock Valley College, and publish our exceptional newsletter – to name but a few things. Order early to be sure of getting your preferred species (some may be available in only limited quantities). Spread the word and share the brochure with anyone you know who might be interested in adding some natives to their home or business landscape.

Both of these sales rely heavily on volunteers to organize ordered plants and staff the pick-up days in April and May. Even if you can volunteer for a just a few hours, your help would be much appreciated. Contact information for the sale coordinators, as well as for our chapter's

volunteer coordinator, are on the back page of this newsletter.

One more sale-related nugget: the chapter will be selling woodland and prairie plants at the Garden Fair at Klehm Arboretum on Saturday and Sunday, June 3 and 4 (inside the main building). Woodland plants will also be sold at Bird Fest at the Sand Bluff Bird Banding Station on Saturday and Sunday, May 13 and 14. More details will follow as events draw near, so watch this space! (Individual plants will also be sold on the pick-up dates for both sales, although some species may be sold out by then. Order early!)

A few thoughts about our critically essential *bees*: There seems to be no end to the perils that threaten our little buzzing friends, and they could use all the help they can get from us. You might be wondering what you can do during these cold months. There are some bees that will emerge in early spring, and late winter is the perfect time to put out nesting materials for them. This could be a nesting block or a bare patch of earth for solitary-nesting bees, or a nesting box for bumble bees. The Xerxes Society has loads of information about native bees and their nests at

http://www.xerxes.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/nests_for_native_bees_fact_sheet_xerxes_society.pdf

Another thing you can do to help the bees brings me back the beginning of this column: start planning your spring garden. With spring around the corner, now is the perfect time to get out your plant sale brochures to find some plants that bees need for food, nectar, and pollen. Even if you don't have a very big yard, a few well-planned planters of natives on your patio or windowsill can be just what the bees need.

Helping the chapter, helping bees: a win-win!

Board of Directors in Action Cathy Johnson, Secretary

Highlights of activities of the Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter board of directors, as discussed at the February 9, 2017 meeting, include the following.

- Plans for the July Lecture and Yard Tour are well underway, with yards and speaker selected, and other details and promotional materials under development.
- The annual woodland plant sale brochure is completed and available in hard copy and on the website.
- The chapter is actively looking for volunteers to help staff the booth at various events, and for the summer lecture and landscape tour on July 15 and 16.

Check It Out! Changes To the Library Ginnie Watson, Head Librarian

The chapter now has two libraries:

- *traveling library*: brought to monthly meetings at Rock Valley College; and
- *reserve library*: maintained at the home of the Librarian.

The *reserve library* contains 91 volumes which have been removed from the traveling library, namely:

- duplicates of books in the traveling library;
- books rarely, if ever, checked out;
- older books on topics for which there are newer, more up to date books that cover the subject better. Many newer books have better, more colorful illustrations; and
- children's books.

The *reserve library* book list can be accessed by finding the Reserve Library on the chapter's website (www.wildonesRRVC.org). Under Resources, select > Lending Library > Reserve Library (<http://www.wildonesrrvc.org/Documents/Library/BookListByTitle-InReserve.pdf>).

There are three ways to borrow a book from the reserve library:

- Fill out a form *at the chapter's monthly meeting* to instruct the Librarian:
 - to bring a specific book(s) to the next monthly meeting; or
 - that you will be making arrangements by phone or email to pick up your desired book at her home: Ginnie Watson, Librarian, 3703 Highcrest Rd., Rockford, IL 61107-2162, tel. (815) 398.0138, email RRVC.Library@gmail.com.
- Email the Librarian *between meetings* to make arrangements for book pickup. This may be done for the traveling library, as well!
- Download the online *Reserve Library Request Form* to your computer. Fill it out and email it to the Librarian at RRVC.Library@gmail.com.

All books borrowed from the reserve library will be subject to the *same rules* as the traveling library. Each book will be due back at the next monthly meeting when the traveling library is open for business. The *overdue policy* currently in place will apply to both libraries.

Save the Date: Keynote Lecture and Landscape Tour

Kim Lowman Vollmer, Event Planning Committee

Save the date for the Wild Ones Rock River Chapter lecture and natural landscape tour! It's never too early to start getting the word out, so feel free to share this far and wide. The theme of this year's event is *Inviting Nature Home: The Pollination of Native Plants*.

Some of you may remember how awesome our last tour was a few years ago, so mark your calendar for what will most certainly be another exciting event. Note that this event will take the place of the chapter's regular monthly meeting (which otherwise happens on the third Thursday of each month).

The events will be as follows:

Thursday, July 13: Lecture by Heather Holm, Northern Illinois University – Rockford, 7 p.m. She is a nationally renowned bee and pollinator scholar, and the author of books on the subject.

Saturday, July 15 and Sunday, July 16: Eight yards and landscapes will be open for tours.

To pull off an event of this magnitude, we will need your support! Please spread the word, and plan to attend the events and volunteer for a few hours if you can.

Look for more information in future issues of the chapter's newsletter and on the chapter's website. Information is provided about the yards and landscapes, as well as about how you can learn and volunteer. For more information on volunteering, please contact Khrista Miskell at (815) 298.5449 or khrista.miskell@comcast.net.

February Meeting Recap Cathy Johnson photos by Ginnie Watson

Ecology of Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers

As the Illinois Botanizer, Christopher David Benda, M.S., wears many hats. He is the immediate past state president of the Illinois Native Plant Society, and the current president of the Southern Illinois chapter of INPS. As a botanist, naturalist, photographer, teacher, and author, Benda provides a variety of educational and training opportunities to people interested in learning more about native plants and their environments. He is active in many organizations and activities, and much more information can be found about him and his work at www.illinoisbotanizer.com and www.ill-inps.org.

The Illinois Botanizer opened his talk with a story about the **Kankakee mallow** (*Iliamna remota*), a native flower found only on tiny Langham Island, in the middle of the Kankakee River. Or at least it had been found there for decades prior to recent years. It is one of the most historically rare of native plants in North America. Twice since the advent of the 21st century, visitors to Langham Island found it overrun with honeysuckle and multiflora rose, and no Kankakee mallow. In response to both of those discoveries, volunteers launched efforts to clear out the invasive plants. Burns were conducted and eventually, as the invasive plants were cleared out, seedlings of the Kankakee mallow emerged once again, underscoring how seeds can lay dormant beneath the soil for long periods of time, until more favorable conditions lead to their revival. Kankakee mallow plants are abundant on Langham Island again today, and seeds are now available from Prairie Moon nursery.

In explaining some of the relationships between the topography of Illinois and its variety of native plants (there are 3,500 species of vascular plants in the state) and their habitats, the speaker provided a little background of the glaciation of the state's terrain. Illinois terrain is very diverse, with fourteen natural divisions having been identified. A guide to those divisions can be found at:

<http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/outreach/natural-divisions/>.

These divisions comprise landscapes ranging from a few small areas that are "driftless" or unglaciated, to larger Mississippi River bottomlands and sand areas, prairies, till planes, and even cypress grove swamps. More information about the glaciation periods of Illinois can be found at

<http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/outreach/illinois-ice-ages/>.

Leading into the subject of the evening's talk -

spring ephemerals - Chris began with the **skunk cabbage** (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) one of the earliest harbingers of spring. This plant is from the *Arum* family, as is the Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*). Its flowers, which are brown, produce a noxious odor of decaying meat and attract early spring flies and other carrion feeders. The scientific name of this plant's genus *Symplocarpus* is derived from the Greek word *symploke* which means "connection" and *karpos* which means "fruit," which provides a verbal description of the arrangement of the fruits on the spadix. The spadix is surrounded by a sheathing bract called a spathe. This structure, like that of the Jack-in-the-pulpit, gives the plant its hooded look. The scientific name for the species *foetidus* is Latin for "stinking," which describes the odor the plant emits when bruised, as does the plant's common name.

Marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*) is from the buttercup family and is not a marigold at all, but may have been given this name due to its bright yellow color. It prefers habitats of calcareous fens and is an indicator of high quality seeps or springs. Those hunting out such seeps sometimes fly over areas searching for golden patches of this plant, which would then show them where to look when back on the ground.

Harbinger-of-spring (*Erigenia bulbosa*) is in the carrot family and has tiny white flowers, and a purple stamen. This flower is the namesake species of the Illinois Native Plant Society.

Spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*) is a very resilient little plant, and one of the earliest and long-lasting of the spring ephemerals. It blooms much earlier, and its white flowers streaked with purple last much later into the season than others.

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) This plant is a member of the poppy family, and has a distinctive leaf, with lobes. Both the genus and species name are from the words for "blood," and, along with its common name, came about due to the reddish sap found in the stem, leaves, and flower stalk.

Liverleaf or sharp-lobed hepatica (*Hepatica acutiloba*) This plant is generally referred to simply as hepatica, although it is also known as liverleaf or liverwort, all due to the lobed structure of its leaves and their resemblance to the human liver. Due to its shape and the Doctrine of Signatures, this plant was used long ago for medicinal purposes. According to Wikipedia, The Doctrine

February Meeting Recap (cont'd)



Our speaker Chris Benda with Tim Lewis, Lynda & Lee Johnson

of Signatures is based on a concept developed by Paracelsus (1493-1541) “(born Phillippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim), a Swiss German philosopher, physician, botanist, astrologer, and general occultist credited as the founder of toxicology who believed that ‘Nature marks each growth... according to its curative benefit,’” about whom more can be found at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paracelsus>. This theory was advanced and embellished upon by Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) in his 1621 book, “The Signature of All Things,” and expanded upon by others over the centuries. You can learn more about this theory at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctrine_of_signatures. Over time, the green leaves of liverleaf turn brown, even more resembling the liver, and in the late 1800s, tons of these leaves were used in patent medicines. It is a member of the buttercup family, and is now known to be toxic.

Dutchman’s breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) The leaves of this distinctively shaped plant are toxic to deer, which may explain why it’s sometimes more abundant than other woodland plants.

Toothwort (*Dentaria lancinata*) “Wort” in the name of a plant comes from an Old English word for “plant” or “root.” The leaves are palmately cleft into 3-5 narrow lobes with dentate teeth along the edge.

Rue anemone (*Anemonella thalictroides*) The “-oides” end of the species name means “similar to,” thus this plant’s name indicates a similarity to *Thalictrum*, a genus of 120-200 species of herbaceous perennial flowering plants in the *Ranunculaceae* (buttercup) family.

Meadow rue (*Thalictrum dasycarpum*) Plants have purple stems and can grow to 6 feet tall, preferring a medium-wet prairie or savanna.

Blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*) “Caul” means stem and “phyllum” means leaf, with this descriptive genus name indicating the plant’s termination in one leaf at the top of the stem. The species can be either male or female.

Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*) This plant was once on the endangered list due to extensive root digging. It can grow to a height of 12 inches and

February Meeting Recap (cont'd)



Hardworking volunteers Sallie Krebs, Jane Evans, Marcia DeClerk, Khrisa Miskell

bears a single terminal flower.

Trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*) There are nine Trillium species in Illinois, with blooms varying from white to red to purple to yellow, and a rare green one that is on the threatened list.

Woodland phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) This is one of the earlier spring natives, and there are several different varieties and colors.

Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*) This plant has a delicate flower that varies from shades of pink to blue, and is deer resistant.

Bellwort (*Uvularia grandiflora*) This plant's name comes from the yellow flower that hangs down from the stem, similar to the human uvula.

The speaker discussed other species of spring ephemerals, including some shrubs, but in the interest of space only some of those found in the upper region of the state have been included here. In the resources listed below, many more can be researched in greater detail.

The speaker also recognized the contributions of George B. Fell, who founded the Natural Land Institute and created the first land preservation system. Fell was a Rockford native and the NLI offices are found here. His work laid the path for the creation of the more than 500 nature preserves now found in Illinois. In 1950, Fell expressed the importance of land conservation

efforts with these words: "We are living at the time of man's final conquest over the wilderness. What we have saved, and what we may save in the next few years, will be all the true wild nature that will remain to pass on from generation to generation in the years ahead. There will never be another chance."

Additional Resources

Several of the plants discussed here are available from the Wild Ones Rock River Valley Chapter's woodland plant sale. The sale brochure and can be found on the website in color and with more information here:

http://wildonesrrvc.org/Documents/Plant%20Sale%20Brochures/WO_Woodland_Sale_2017.pdf

Spring Wildflowers of the Northeast, by Carol Gracie, published by Princeton University Press

This is an excellent book on spring ephemerals and other spring wildflowers that can be found in the Wild Ones RRVC library, along with other resources on ephemerals and woodland plants.

<http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/> is a useful source for identifying Illinois native plants.

BONAP , Biota of North America Program, www.bonap.org , provides an atlas which shows geographic distribution of orchids and other plants in North America.

The Illinois Natural History Survey (INHS) has a searchable gallery with photos and information on Illinois plants, available at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/find>.

The INHS also provides a link to an article describing the protocol for assigning an integer from 0 to 10 as a coefficient of conservatism (C). John B. Taft, Gerould S. Wilhelm, Douglas M. Ladd, and Linda A. Masters. *Floristic Quality Assessment for Vegetation in Illinois*, available at http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/files/5413/4021/3268/Wilhelm_Illinois_FQA.pdf.

USDA Wetland Indicator Status, available at <http://plants.usda.gov/wetinfo.html>.

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!!

206 memberships as of February 23, 2017

Special thanks to our members who made contributions above the basic \$37 dues!

Kirby & Dan Doyle, Rockford, IL
 David Kostka, Juda, WI
 Ed & Charlotte Kletecka, South Beloit, IL
 Sallie & Jim Krebs, Cherry Valley, IL
 Judy Letourneau, Rockford, IL
 Peg Lockman, Roscoe, IL
 Mark Luthin, Belvidere, IL
 Colleen McDonald, Rockford, IL
 Anne Meyer, Rockford, IL
 Cindy Torrisi, Belvidere, IL

Welcome to our new member!

Brian Hale

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!

67 attended the February meeting, including at least 8 guests.

A big thank you to our February meeting volunteers!

Greeters: Don & Marilyn Heneghan
Refreshments: Khrista Miskell & Anita Johnson
AV/Sound Equipment: Bob Arevalo
Meeting Recap: Cathy Johnson
Photographer: Ginnie Watson
Library Assistant: Marcia DeClerk
Merchandise: Cynthia Chmell

Anniversaries:

5 Years:

Cynthia Chmell

It is preferred that membership renewals be sent directly to the chapter for quicker processing and to avoid delays in receiving your chapter newsletter. Remember that your dues include membership in both National Wild Ones and our chapter. Please use the address below:

Sallie Krebs
 Wild Ones Rock River Valley
 7492 Renfro Rd.
 Cherry Valley, IL 61016

Your expiration date is on your chapter newsletter above your name on the label. You will be mailed a renewal reminder from the chapter two months prior to your expiration date with a completed membership form and return envelope for your convenience.

Twenty-five percent of all dues paid (about \$9.25 per membership) 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: membership@wildonesrrvc.org or call (815) 540-4730 if you have any questions about membership.

Wild Ones Annual Memberships:
 Household \$37, Associate (student, senior, disabled) \$20,
 Affiliate Non-Profit Organization or Educator \$90,
 Business \$250.

Thank you for your continuing support!



2017 Chapter Programs and Events

March 16
7:00 p.m.

Conducting a Woodland
Prescribed Burn

Russell Brunner
Byron Forest
Preserve District

Rock Valley College
PE Center, PEC 0110
(lower level)

April 20
7:00 p.m.

Trends in Backyard Wildlife

Jack MacRae
Natural Historian of
the Chicago Region

Rock Valley College
PE Center, PEC 0110
(lower level)

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.
 For more information, contact Bob Arevalo at (815) 332.3343



NATIVE PLANTS. NATURAL LANDSCAPES

ROCK RIVER VALLEY

ROCK RIVER VALLEY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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

Don't become extinct!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 3/1/2017, 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:

Sallie Krebs
Wild Ones Rock River Valley
7492 Renfro Rd.
Cherry Valley, IL 61016

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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

Regular meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at Rock Valley College, Physical Education Center PEC0110 (lower level), 3301 North Mulford Road, Rockford, 61114.

Special meetings, outings, and events are scheduled periodically and sometimes replace the regular meeting. Contact any officer to confirm information about our next meeting.

Rock River Valley Chapter Board and Coordinators

Board

President: Constance McCarthy
(815) 282.0316 constance@wildonesrrvc.org

Vice President: Jerry Paulson
(815) 222.4414 jerry@wildonesrrvc.org

Secretary: Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865
cathy@wildonesrrvc.org

Treasurer: Deb Rogers (815) 624.1036

At-Large: Doreen O'Brien (815) 985.4064
doreen@wildonesrrvc.org

At-Large: Kim Lowman Vollmer
(815) 397.6044 kim@wildonesrrvc.org

Immediate Past Co-President:
Ginnie Watson (815) 398.0138
ginnie@wildonesrrvc.org

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membership@wildonesrrvc.org

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(815) 399.3787 rrvc.woodland@gmail.com

Prairie Plant Sale: Cynthia Chmell & Bobbie Lambiotte, (815) 969.7435 & (815) 398.6257

Tree & Shrub Sale: John Peterson
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Plant Rescues & Seed Collection:
Mary Anne Mathwich (815) 721.5187
maryanne@wildonesrrvc.org

Programs: Bob Arevalo (815) 332.3343
bob@wildonesrrvc.org

Landscape Tour & Lecture: Mary Anne Mathwich (as to the left)

Youth Education & Grants:
Kim Lowman Vollmer (as to the left)

Booth, FREC rep., website: Tim Lewis
(815) 874.3468 tim@wildonesrrvc.org

Facebook: Marilyn Heneghan
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Library: Ginnie Watson (as to the left)

Mentors: Melanie Costello (815) 645.8430
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Merchandise: Cynthia Chmell
(815) 969.7435 chmell@wildonesrrvc.org

Publicity: Doreen O'Brien (as to the left)