

**Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.**

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All articles for the July 2019 newsletter, must be submitted to:  
[Constance@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:Constance@wildonesrrvc.org)  
by June 23, 2019.

*The Tallgrass Prairie: Grocery Store, Apothecary, and Love Shop*

*Thursday, June 20, 2019*

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

Time: 7:00 p.m.



Native Americans and early settlers saw the tallgrass prairie as their home – a place that supplied everything from groceries to art supplies; medicine to love charms. Join prairie steward, natural history instructor, and writer Cindy Crosby for interactive stories of prairie ethnobotany – how people used prairie plants throughout history – and the potential resources our prairie plants may hold for the future.

Cindy Crosby is the author, compiler, or contributor to more than 20 books, most recently *Tallgrass Conversations: In Search of the Prairie Spirit* (2019) with Thomas Dean and *The Tallgrass Prairie: An Introduction* (Northwestern University Press 2017). She earned her masters degree in natural resources from

the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point in 2014. Cindy coordinates the dragonfly monitoring programs at two natural area sites. She is a prairie steward at The Morton Arboretum and a steward at Nachusa Grasslands in Franklin Grove, IL. Cindy is a certified trainer and guide with the National Association for Interpretation, and speaks and teaches in the Midwest. She blogs each week at *Tuesdays in the Tallgrass* @Wordpress. See more at [www.cindycrosby.com](http://www.cindycrosby.com).

This program is free and open to the public.  
For more information, call (779) 537.8939.



## Message from the President Constance McCarthy



**Constance McCarthy**

*photo by Tim Lewis*

### What Can Be Accomplished with Serious Dedication and a Solid Plan

At the time of writing this message, I am in Chicago and hope to visit the Alfred Caldwell Lily Pool behind the Lincoln Park Conservatory. It strikes me as a peaceful place to take a break from the hustle and bustle of the city. But

what does a lily pool have to do with native plants? More than you might think at first glance. Some aspects are directly related to natives, while others mirror a common story line when we try to garden or landscape in a way not in harmony with nature. And still others offer a fine example of dedication to important goals and principles.

The pool was built in a Victorian style in 1889. With the aim of growing tropical lilies, the pond was heated. This reminded me of the misguided importation of turf grass from England by colonists. Just because something grows well in England does not mean that it is suitable for wholesale importation into the United States, with its very differing climate and ecosystem.

Because the foundational premise of the lily pool was flawed from the outset, it eventually fell into disrepair and ruin. (No surprise that those tropical lilies - even in a heated pond - did not respond well to our harsh northern Illinois winters.)

Alfred Caldwell, who had worked with Jens Jensen, was brought in to design the rebuild of the lily pool for the Works Progress Administration. Near the end of the work on the project, the park district misguidedly decided to eliminate the budget for planting natives around the lily pool. With a dedication I can imagine seeing in some of our Wild Ones members, Caldwell cashed in his \$5,000 life insurance policy for only \$250 and bought thousands of native plants for the project. He transported them from Sauk County himself, and the next day, with the help of only four other people, planted the natives all around the lily pool.

While things seemed to be back on track for a while, in the 1950s things veered again into head-slapping, misguided territory. The head of the Lincoln Park Zoo decided to turn the beautiful lily pool into a rookery for exotic birds and water fowl. Not only were the birds allowed to overgraze to the point of having a devastating impact on the pond and plantings, but there ceased to be any management of invasives and weed trees. The understory became overgrown and the lily pool became a sad sight. It was as if no lessons had been learned from the first round of poor planning for a tropical lily pool. The non-native birds didn't do anything to help maintain the ecosystem, and wound up ruining it all over again.

Fear not, the tale has a happy ending: Starting in 1998 a massive renovation was undertaken. This time, the park district and a citizens' group, the Lincoln Park Conservancy, worked together, and sought input from numerous focus groups. The goal was to achieve a consensus (fancy that!) on how best to restore and maintain the lily pool and surroundings going forward. The result has been a beautiful and well maintained area for the benefit of not only the public, but the natural world, as well.

With a solid plan in hand, and dedication to achieving the long-term goals, there's no limit on what can be accomplished. Sound inspiration for all of us!



## May Meeting Recap Jerry Paulson

photos by Tim Lewis



**Jennifer Lazewski,**  
presenter of the May  
program

### Pollinators and Other Beneficial Insects in Gardens and Prairies

Jennifer Lazewski is an educator with University of Wisconsin-Extension, a volunteer with the Southwest Wisconsin Master Gardener Association and founder of its Pollinator Group. She is an experienced butterfly and hummingbird gardener.

Her motto is "If you plant it they will come." She has learned about native bees, wasps, flies, and beetles that are pollinators by observing what insects come to the flowers planted in her own backyard. She started working on pollinators after hearing Doug Tallamy, Heather Holm, and others speak about pollinators. She has a normal yard, but has attracted many beneficial insects by using a wide variety of native species of plants.

Why should we learn about and support these insects?

- Pollinators: the message has been getting through that insects are important for pollination
- Beneficial insects: they protect yards without having to use pesticides
- Ecosystems and natural balance: natural yards are an important part of maintaining ecosystem diversity and balance.

**"A well-made garden should be full of life, human and otherwise, providing infinite, daily opportunities to experience that glorious multiplicity of things and living processes."**

Rick Darke, Preface to *The Living Landscape*

What is a pollinator? Pollinators are animals (primarily insects) that help transfer pollen. Bees are the most important and efficient pollinators. They purposefully seek and gather pollen, and their bodies have features to gather, hold, and transport pollen. Most other pollinators seek nectar and only incidentally transfer pollen.

Why are pollinators important? Approximately one-third of the food we eat requires insect pollinators, while 75% of world's food crops require or benefit from pollinators.

Beneficial insects, also known as good bugs or natural enemies, fight pests. Some are specialists, killing only particular species or life stage of certain insects, while others are generalists that kill many insects. Some are also pollinators.

When a plant is under attack by pests, plants emit chemicals that attract beneficial insects which attack the pests. Good bugs arrive faster to kill the pests if nearby when host/prey are nearby. Pesticides interfere with these natural cycles by killing both good and bad bugs.

When insecticides are used, it starts your garden on a pesticide treadmill. Beneficial insects are killed along with the target insects, target insects move in from nearby yards that have no enemies to keep them in check, and the bad bugs may end up at higher population levels. Some of the bad bugs are more resistant to pesticides, and they live and multiply. Frequent use of pesticides wipes out less resistant insects while the resistant ones live, requiring ever stronger pesticides to control the target insects. With no natural enemies, the pests surge in numbers.

Why interrelationships matter: Many animals and insects develop specialized relationships with their food sources.

- 96% of terrestrial birds rear their young on caterpillars.
- Chickadees feed their young a 95-100% caterpillar diet, totaling 390-570 per nest per day.
- Insects usually only feed on a particular plant or part of a plant.

Plants do not want to be eaten and develop chemical defenses, while insects develop ways to overcome those defenses.

Native Bees. There are 3,604 species in the U.S., with approximately 400-500 in Wisconsin. Native bees include more than just bumble bees. Honey bees are not native, but were brought here by the colonists. 85-90% of bees are solitary nesters that provision and lay their eggs before dying. Only honey bees, bumblebees, and some sweat bees are social or colony nesters.

## May Meeting Recap (cont'd)



**Dave Schubert talks with Jennifer Lazewski following the program.**

Solitary bees rarely sting. They do not have a large hive or nest or extra bees that protect them. Only female bees can sting. Native solitary bees live for only a few weeks around the same time each year and take a year to go from egg to adult.

Native bees nest by mining or digging in the soil or in cavities or holes. Most solitary bees dig tunnels in the ground for nesting. Cavity nesters use hollow plant stems, empty rodent and other burrows, holes in wood or masonry, and pre-existing holes such as beetle tunnels.

Female leafcutter bees make at least 15 trips to line a nesting cell with leaves of different sizes and shapes for different parts of the cell. Then she makes around 20 trips to provide pollen and nectar (bee bread) for the egg. She lays 20-30 eggs in her lifetime.

To protect nesting habitat for native bees, leave some areas in your yard and garden bare and undistributed. Most solitary bee species nest in the ground, in bare patches of loose soil, and take a full year for their life cycle. Plant native bunch grasses...bumble bees and solitary bees nest at the bases of native bunch grasses. Leave things a little messy, and avoid disturbing existing bee nests.

To identify bees, note where is there pollen on the bee. Leafcutter bees, mason bees, and carder bees carry pollen on their abdomen. Honeybees and bumblebees carry pollen on their legs in pollen baskets or pollen hairs (scopa), specialized hairs that gather and keep pollen.

Some bees emerge the same time as the specialty plant on which they feed. Spring ephemerals often have specialist bees to match. Timing is important both ways for the bees and for the survival of the plant.

Mining bees emerge in early spring, while sweat bees emerge in summer. Giant carpenter bees are solitary, cavity nesters in wood, and longer lived than other bees.

The bumble bee annual cycle is as follows:

- Queens that are already mated emerge from diapause in early spring and need early blooms for energy and reproduction.
- They nest in empty spaces, either in the ground (abandoned rodent holes) or above ground (birdhouses, twig or grass piles, compost).
- The queen lays and tends the first brood herself, and then daughter workers take over.
- New queens, produced at end of the season, then mate, feed, and overwinter.
- All other bumble bees die by winter.

The rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*) is endangered in Illinois. The worker has a rusty patch on the thorax, almost always completely surrounded by yellow hairs. The queen has short hair and the hair on her head is entirely black. Winnebago County has had many reports of rusty patched bumble bees. You can report bumble bee sightings to Bee Spotter, a citizen science project coordinated by the University of Illinois, at <https://beespotter.org>.

## May Meeting Recap (cont'd)

Wasps are pollinators, predators, and parasites. There are over 30,000 species of wasps nationwide. They range in size from smaller than a period to approximately 5 inches. Adult wasps usually feed on nectar, fruit and plant juice, and aphid honeydew. Wasp larvae are carnivores, fed by adults.

A few wasps are colony nesters, but most are solitary nesters. Solitary wasp females provision egg cells, then seal and leave them. Some wasps aggregate in combs and nests.

Wasps do play a role in pollination. Although wasps do not have as much hair as bees and flies, they can still carry pollen from flower to flower. Wasps are eaten by other species, so they are part of the food web. Many parasitic wasps are cultured and used to control crop pests.

Wasps can sting again and again. Only female wasps can sting. Solitary wasps rarely sting.

Wasps are difficult to identify and classify, as there are too many, and they are too small and often look alike. You can submit photos to [bugguide.net](http://bugguide.net) if you are curious about what species you have.

Like bees, some wasps are social while others are solitary nesters. Social predator wasps include yellowjacket, bald-faced hornet, and paper wasp. German yellowjackets are not native. Yellowjackets nest in the ground. Solitary predator wasps sting and paralyze their prey and feed them to larvae.

The life cycle of solitary wasps is like solitary bees. Females construct one or more nests independently. There can be several generations each year. They collect one or more prey insects, which are paralyzed, for each egg. The female wasp lays an egg on the prey or on a thread above the prey. The wasp larvae eat the prey and then pupate. New adults emerge by digging or chewing their way out of the nest.

Parasitoid wasps lay their eggs on their food hosts. They attack all life stages of other insects, and use plants or seeds as food sources for larvae, creating galls. Aphidius wasps only lay eggs on aphids. The larvae eat the aphids from the inside, leaving "aphid mummies" on plants.

Penn State Extension has published lists of native plants that support bees, wasps, and beneficial insects. Visit <http://ento.psu.edu/pollinators/resources-and-outreach/beesbugs-blooms-2013-a-pollinator-trial>.

For more information, contact Jennifer at [jenlazewski@gmail.com](mailto:jenlazewski@gmail.com).

Some flies are pollinators. Their hairy bodies pick up and move pollen while they seek nectar for food. They do not steal pollen to feed their young. Some flies also eat aphids, caterpillars, and other pest insects. The syrphid fly is a voracious predator, while the tachid fly lays its eggs on many garden pests.

Beetles are pollinators of approximately 52 naive plant species in the U.S. and Canada. Soldier beetles are common pollinators on goldenrods. The adults and larvae feed on aphids and other garden pests. Blister beetles feed on pollen and nectar and move pollen around. Long-horned beetles are attracted to flowers to feed and nectar, and can pollinate flowers.

Beneficial insect larvae and adults kill and eat other insects. It is okay to buy green lacewings to control insects in your garden, but do not purchase lady beetles. They will fly away and are not worth buying. Praying mantis will just eat each other.

How can you support pollinators in your garden?

- Aim for at least three to five species blooming at any given time, from early spring to late fall. This includes trees, shrubs perennials, annuals, herbs, fruits, and vegetables.
- Choose plants that suit the site, considering soil type, drainage, and sun.
- Choose a variety of flower colors (bees cannot see red or orange).
- Choose a variety of flower sizes and styles with easy nectar sources.
- Plant large groups of the same or similar colors.
- Plant groups of the same plants (three to five, at least).
- Incorporate native plant species into your existing garden.
- Avoid invasive plants and noxious weeds, as well as highly modified cultivars.

## "Funky Nests in Funky Places" Contest

Although our native plantings attract birds to our home landscapes, sometimes those birds decide to build their nests in rather unusual places.

What prompts birds to build nests where they do? Some of their real estate choices are real head-scratchers. That's where the Funky Nests in Funky Places challenge comes in. Anyone who finds a bird nest in a creative, quirky location can participate. Entries can be photos, poems, stories, or artwork. Past participants have found nests built on statues, barbecue grills, traffic lights, wind chimes, and golf shoes - pretty much anywhere. The contest is run by the Celebrate Urban Birds citizen-science project at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

The entry deadline is June 30. Submit entries at [funkynests.org](http://funkynests.org).

Entries will be judged in several categories, including nests that are the funkiest, the cutest, the funniest, and the most inconvenient. Participants don't have to be bird or photography experts. They are just looking for interesting stories. All ages are welcome to participate as individuals or with a class, community center, or afterschool program.

Prizes include Celestron binoculars, window feeders, pocket bird guides, online courses about birds, Cornell Lab of Ornithology stickers, posters, and more. Find more information about how to locate nests, approach them without disturbing the birds, and enter the contest at [funkynests.org](http://funkynests.org). In Spanish: [nidoschiflados.org](http://nidoschiflados.org).



Laura Sjoquist prepares plant sale signs for plants sold at Bird Fest. Rick Burton browses the plants.

*photo by Tim Lewis*

## 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!!

### 215 memberships as of May 23, 2019

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

Francie Barnes, Rockford  
Phil & Carolyn Fulkerson, Rockford  
Cynthia Nelson, DeKalb  
Karen Retzke, Belvidere

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

Patti Lawrence, Roscoe  
Toni Murray, Roscoe  
Judi Pivoras, Rockford

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

Ken Wengert & Ken Bartelt, Pecatonica

*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!*

75 attended the May meeting, including at least 4 guests

A big thank you to our May meeting volunteers!

*Greeters:* Linda Ricker

*Refreshments:* Anita Johnson

*AV/Sound Equipment:* Bob Arevalo

*Meeting Recap:* Jerry Paulson

*Photographer:* Tim Lewis, Sallie Krebs

*Library Assistants:* Karen Matz

*Merchandise:* Cynthia Chmell

**A special thank you to:** Mike & Deb Eickman, Laura Sjoquist and the many volunteers for helping with the plant sale and booth at Bird Fest this year. Jane Evans and Ginnie Watson for the plant sale at Nicholas Conservatory.

#### Anniversaries:

##### 15 Years:

Olga & Daniel Bechtol, Steward  
Ginnie Watson, Rockford

##### 10 Years:

Phil & Carolyn Fulkerson, Rockford  
Nancy Jacobson, Rockford

##### 5 Years:

Kyle & Bernice Kuranz, Roscoe  
Khrisa Miskell, Rockford  
Charles Prorok & Marcia Mueller, Rockford

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.

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: [membership@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:membership@wildonesrrvc.org) 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.

Thank you for your continuing support!

## 2019 Chapter Programs and Events

### June 20

7:00 p.m.

Prairie Ethnobotany: People & Plants

### Cindy Crosby

The Morton Arboretum

Rock Valley College  
Phys. Ed. Center

### July 18

7:00 p.m.

Member Potluck and Natural Yard Tour

### August 15

7:00 p.m.

Native Shrubs & Trees  
for Birds & Bees

### David Stevens

Curator of Longenecker  
Horticultural Gardens,  
UW-Madison Arboretum

Rock Valley College  
Phys. Ed. Center

Unless noted, programs are free and open to the public. Programs are subject to change.  
For more information, contact Lisa Johnson at (779) 537.8939



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 6/1/2019, 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

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](mailto:constance@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Vice President:* Jerry Paulson  
(815) 222.4414 [jerry@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:jerry@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Secretary:* Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865  
[cathy@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:cathy@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Treasurer:* Janet Giesen (815) 762.5912  
[janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com)

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

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

### Coordinators

*Membership:* Sallie Krebs (815) 627.0343  
[membership@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:membership@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Newsletter-Production:* Pambi Camacho  
(815) 332.7637 [pambi@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:pambi@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Newsletter-Editorial:* Constance McCarthy  
(as to the left)

*Volunteers:* Laura Sjoquist  
[sjoquist.laura@gmail.com](mailto:sjoquist.laura@gmail.com)

*External Plant Sales:* Jane Evans  
(815) 399.3787 Constance McCarthy (as to the left)

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

*Tree & Shrub Sale:* Brian Hale, (815) 289.2384, [moyogi2@gmail.com](mailto:moyogi2@gmail.com); Jerry Paulson (as to the left)

*Plant Rescues & Seed Collection:*  
Mary Anne Mathwich (815) 721.5187  
[maryanne@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:maryanne@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Programs:* Lisa Johnson, (815) 965.3433,  
[lisa.johnson@burpee.org](mailto:lisa.johnson@burpee.org)

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

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

*Facebook:* Sallie Krebs (as to the left)

*Library:* Ginnie Watson (815) 398.0138  
[library.rvc@gmail.com](mailto:library.rvc@gmail.com)

*Mentors:* [open position]

*Merchandise:* Cynthia Chmell  
(815) 969.7435 [chmell@wildonesrrvc.org](mailto:chmell@wildonesrrvc.org)

*Publicity:* Joyce & John Mori,  
(815) 484.3657 [johnlmori@icloud.com](mailto:johnlmori@icloud.com)

*Show Me/Help Me:* Linda Ricker,  
(217) 649.3966,  
[greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com](mailto:greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com)