

Promoting Native Plants for Natural Landscapes.

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www.wildonesrrvc.org



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All articles for the May 2021 newsletter, must be submitted to: Jerry Paulson at paulsonjerry@aol.com by April 23, 2021

The Sedges You Know, the Sedges You Don't
Thursday, April 15, 2021

Time: 7:00 p.m.
via Zoom Presentation

Dr. Andrew Hipp, Senior Scientist in Plant Systematics and Herbarium Director at the Morton Arboretum will introduce us to the numerous native sedges of the Chicago Region. He will cover their taxonomic and ecological context, including photos of the plants and the habitats where they live, in a "sedge nerdy but understandable way".

Andrew Hipp conducts research on the origins and implications of plant biodiversity. His current work focuses on oaks, sedges, woody plant diversity, and interactions between diversity of plant lineages and biodiversity of plant communities. You can read about his research at <http://systematics.mortonarb.org/> and follow his natural history blog (which includes plenty of sedges) at <http://botanistsfieldnotes.com/>.



Dr. Andrew Hipp

Information on how to connect to the Zoom presentation will be posted on the chapter website (www.wildonesrrvc.org) and Facebook page, and distributed via Constant Contact to members prior to the program. The program is free and open to the public. For more information, call (779) 537-8939.

Native Plant Sale Update Janet Giesen

Our annual native plant sale is now underway! Advance orders are due **Friday, April 30**. New this year is a **members-only pickup on Thursday, May 6 from 3 to 7 p.m.**, followed by order pickups and public sales on **Friday, May 7 from 3 to 7 p.m. and Saturday, May 8 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

We have carefully chosen a wide range of native plant species for rain gardens, butterfly gardens, pollinator gardens, and to attract insects and birds. The plant sale brochure contains information that will help you select plants for your gardening needs. Knowledgeable volunteers will be available on pickup days if you have questions. 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. Plants other than on the brochure may be available at the

Cont. on page 2

Message from the President Jerry Paulson



Jerry Paulson

This month's program may bring on a feeling of déjà vu because we had scheduled Dr. Andrew Hipp to speak to us in March 2020 about sedges. His presentation was cancelled as we struggled to figure out how to continue to provide educational programs via Zoom, YouTube and other platforms as everyone was sheltering at home due to the first wave of Covid 19 infections.

Since then we have mastered the art of virtual meetings. Last month's program by Peggy Doty about woodpeckers of Illinois had more than 70 people listening in, the most number of people so far! Thank you Linda Ricker for recruiting Peggy to speak and writing the recap of the program (see page 3).

Dr. Hipp's presentation, "The Sedges You Know, the Sedges You Don't", should be just as informative and interesting. He has been described as being "incredibly knowledgeable and extremely passionate" about the native plants of northern Illinois. Sedges are not well known by most of us, but they are just

as beautiful and ecologically important as our native wildflowers and grasses. Let's see if we can get 100 people signed-in to see Dr. Hipp's presentation.

Several native species of sedges will be for sale through our Native Plant Sale this spring. Thank you to Jane Evans and Janet Giesen for coordinating the sale this year. We need everyone who can to volunteer for time slots from May 4 to 8 to setup, label and sort plants, pull pre-orders, direct traffic, help customers, take money, and deliver plants to cars. Please text me or email me if you can volunteer to help at the plant sale.

We will also need help on June 5 & 6th at our booth at the Klehm Arboretum Garden Fair. We will be selling native plants and distributing the new National Wild Ones' booklet, "Native Garden Design: A Guide to Creating Beautiful Home Landscapes," (also available at our May plant sale). If you can help at our garden fair booth, please call Jane Evans or send me a text or email.

It's been more than a year since Tim Lewis, past Chapter and National Wild Ones president, and a passionate advocate for natural landscaping, died. Last fall our chapter planted a bur oak tree in his honor at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve. Please read Kim Lowman Vollmer's tribute to Tim below.

Tim Lewis Memorial Bur Oak Kim Lowman Vollmer

Tim Lewis was like the mighty bur oak tree! When the first settlers came to the Midwest prairie, the big burly bur oaks stood majestically. When you arrived at our Wild One's meetings, there was Tim, with his camera - easy to spot. The bur oak lives 200-300 years and has the largest leaves and acorns of all the oaks. This stately tree provides food and shelter to a wide range of wildlife. Tim, with his knowledge and high standards, assisted a wide range of people locally and nationally in their quest to learn about native plants.

A bur oak was planted as a memorial to Tim Lewis. It was planted at Atwood Homestead Forest Preserve and can be found near the Shady Oak picnic shelter, near the parking lot. This memorial tree is labeled on a brass plaque at the Forest Preserve's Headquarters. Thank you, Tim for all you did, and for your wisdom, enthusiasm and dedication.



Native Plant Sale Update, cont.

public sale dates. The plant sale brochure is available on our website at http://wildonesrrvc.org/Plant_Sales.html

COVID-19 precautions: As a courtesy to volunteers and customers, please wear a mask and follow physical distancing protocols during pickup and public sale dates.

Recap of March Presentation

Linda Ricker

Woodpeckers of Illinois

70 people joined us online for the March 18th program featuring Peggy Doty, Illinois Extension Educator. Peggy specializes in environmental education as it relates to wildlife and water quality issues. Her interest in human reactions to wildlife has kept her teaching environmental education for more than 20 years, helping people understand wildlife as it relates to their lives.

Peggy showed us how the woodpeckers of Illinois play a role in the environment around us. Beginning with the differences between woodpeckers and other bird species, we learned there are nearly 200 true woodpecker species in the world but only 7 actually live here in Illinois. From smallest to largest, they are: Downy, Hairy, Red-Headed, Red-Bellied, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker (Yellow shafted) and the Pileated.

Woodpecker fossils have been found dating back some 24-50 million years, including feathers, bones, and nest cavities which were found in petrified trees in Arizona.

As birds go, woodpeckers generally live longer than smaller birds. The Illinois woodpeckers live from 5-8 years for the smallest Downy Woodpecker to 10-20 years for the largest Pileated Woodpecker. The Downy is about 6 inches long and the Pileated is 17 inches long.

The Downy is the smallest at about 6" long, black and white, the male having a red cap on the back of his head. The Hairy Woodpecker is similar to the Downy but 9" long and with a longer bill. The Redheaded Woodpecker is about 10 inches long and the only one with a red hood. The Red-bellied Woodpecker is about the same size, but with a narrow band of red over the top and back of his head. The Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is about 8 1/2 inches long and the male has a red throat. The Northern Flicker is about 12 inches long, has a red crescent on the back of his head and the male has a black mustache stripe. The Pileated woodpecker is about 17 inches long with a red crest...think Woody Woodpecker from the old cartoons.

All our woodpeckers are cavity nesters. They create the cavities, use them as a nest and then

leave them for the next creature to live in, such as owls. Woodpeckers excavate trees for food such as adult and larval stages of beetles. They raise their young in the cavities they create, and also use the cavities as winter protection or cover. The food they eat from the trees is almost exclusively theirs to eat, with only the Brown Creeper and Nuthatches for competition.

Woodpeckers share several body traits. The head design allows them to strike hard surfaces hundreds of times per minute absorbing G forces of 600-1500 G's. Their tongues are actually attached at the top of their heads and run down behind to come out through the bill with an incredible reach and barbed end to capture food inside the tree such as beetle larvae. Their unique zygodactyl toe arrangement of two front and two back toes allow them to climb up the tree trunks, while special bones in their vertebrae allow their tails to act as a stabilizer during drumming and climbing about on tree trunks.

They have a unique flying pattern that looks like a bowling pin shooting through the air until the wings flap again to regain loft.

Woodpeckers communicate by calls and drumming patterns, but do not actually have what other birds have that we call songs. Drumming is a favorite springtime activity to establish territories.

If you plan to feed woodpeckers choose peanuts, black oil sunflower seeds and suet. This is mostly for our enjoyment to attract birds to our feeders for viewing, as these birds can definitely feed themselves by going after the pests that often cause boring damage in our trees.

Peggy has a real gift for pointing out the habits of wildlife and how they fit into our world and the part they play in the whole realm of nature. If you have a chance to attend any of her other programs, take advantage of her knowledge and interesting presentations.



Peggy Doty

What's Blooming? Lenae Weichel

***Hepatica acutiloba* Sharp-Lobed Hepatica**

Buttercup family (Rununculaceae)

**Formerly: *Anemone Hepatica*, *Hepatica nobilis acuta*
AKA: Liverwort, Liver Leaf, Hepatica**

One of the earliest of the woodland flowers, sharp-lobed hepatica blooms in April on hairy stalks above last year's basal leaves, many turned burgundy. Sepals can range from snowy white, through pink and lavender, and heading toward bright purple (although the related, round-lobed hepatica [*Hepatica americana/obtusa*] tends to have the brightest purple blooms). Praised by 19th Century American Naturalist, John Burroughs, as the "gem of the woods," he praised their early arrival, even composing poems about hepatica.

Leaves are deeply tri-lobed with smooth edges and pointed tips. New growth emerges in late spring after flowering has completed and leaves remain green into later fall when they darken and become speckled or fully burgundy. They persist through the winter. It was these leaves for which the plant was named. Thought to resemble a liver in both shape and color, early medicinal uses were directed at the liver and other digestive functions (although

they likely did more harm than good). It was so popular with Europeans that large amounts of dried leaves were exported to Europe for use in patent medicines. Native Americans also made multiple medicinal applications and may have used it as a dye.



Flowers are visited by early-emerging insects gathering pollen (they have no nectar) including small Carpenter bees (*Xylocopa virginica*), Flower flies (*Syrphus ribesii*), Sweat bees (*Halictidae*), and Miner bees (*Andrenidae*), as well as other small bees and flies (and even honey bees). Some flowers are also self-fertilized. Pointed fruits (achenes) form in round clusters by mid-May which droop down to the soil level and attract ants who help with seed dispersal.

Hepatica is found in all but the sandiest woodlands in our area, preferring loamy or calcareous soils and shady hillsides in the northern two-thirds of the state. There are numerous specimens along the wildflower trail at Anna Page Conservation Forest.

Chapter Donations in Action

Kim Lowman Vollmer

Wild Ones strives to see the use of native plants expanded into more and more areas. One of our visions is to "join forces with others to preserve native plants and biodiversity from loss." The One such initiative is our native plant sale that allows us to financially support like-minded organizations. We recently donated \$500 to Friends of Nachusa Grasslands, located in Franklin Grove, IL. In addition to restoring habitat at Nachusa there is a great deal of research taking place. Our donation will be used toward scientific research, where they study ways of improving our understanding, knowledge and management of grasslands: Scientific Research at Nachusa Grasslands. To learn more about this year's projects at Nachusa Grasslands, visit their webpage at <https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/science-grants-2021.html>.



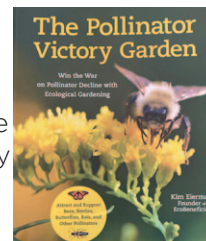
Mini Grant Program

The Rock River Valley Chapter of Wild Ones offers a mini grant program, which is modeled after the National Wild Ones' Seeds for Education Grant (SFE). Wild Ones' mission is to "promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities." The mini grant program expands our mission to promote the use of native plants and seeds in outdoor learning areas. A key component of the mini grant program involves children in hands-on learning activities in which they plan, plant, and care for native plant projects. Mini grant projects are designed for nonprofit organizations such as nature centers, schools, religious institutions, libraries, and government agencies. Recent projects have included pollinator gardens, rain gardens, monarch way stations, and more. Please visit the RESOURCES tab of our website for more information and a grant application. Send questions and grant proposals to our Grant Coordinator, Kim Lowman Vollmer, kimlowvol@aol.com, or call her at 815-397-6044.

Library Has New Titles Ginnie Watson

The Fran Lowman Memorial Library offers these new books to help you learn which natives benefit our endangered pollinators. Bees, birds, and spiders have their own books to show you how they benefit from the native landscape. There are books that will introduce you to the wonders of the subsoil ecosystem and how especially important it is to the natural world.

- Douglas Tallamy, PhD, has written a new book, *The Nature of Oaks*, which will be coming out March 30, 2021. A copy has been ordered which will be available as soon as it arrives.
- Kim Eierman, Founder of EcoBeneficial, provides us with an excellent book on pollinators. This book will help you “win the war on pollinator decline”! This is one of our newer books.
- *Common Spiders of North America*, by Richard Bradley, was recommended during one of our programs last fall on Spiders found here in Illinois. As carnivorous predators they play an important part in the delicate balance of nature.



These books and over 170 more can be found in our chapter library which now can be found updated and online on the chapter website! www.wildonesRRVC.org > Resources > Lending Library To borrow the book or books of your choice contact the Library Coordinator with the titles you wish to read. Arrangements will be made for you to pick up and return your books. Be sure to read the LIBRARY LENDING POLICY found on the website. Contact information for the Library Coordinator may also be found on the website.

2021 Chapter Programs and Events

- April 15** The Sedges You Know, the Sedges You Don't | Andrew Hipp, Morton Arboretum
7:00 p.m. via live Zoom program
- April 30** Deadline for Native Plant Sale Orders
- May 6-8** Native Plant Sale Pick-up Dates
- May 20** Rare Spring Flora of Apple River Canyon | Randy Nyboer via virtual tour
7:00 p.m.

Programs are subject to change. For more information, contact Lisa Johnson at (779) 537.8939

Membership Updates 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!

185 memberships as of March 26, 2021

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

Cynthia Chmell, Rockford
Perry & Debbie Gay, Rockford
Don & Marilyn Heneghan, Roscoe
Judy Letourneau, Rockford
Cynthia Nelson, DeKalb
Ted Ross, Rockford
Paul & Amy Seiler, Rockford

Welcome to our new member(s)!

Joanne Thompson, South Beloit

Anniversaries:

5 Years:

Sallie Krebs, Cherry Valley
Ruth & Thomas Little, Rockford
Keevin Quillen, Rockford

Thank you for your continuing support!



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

Don't become extinct!

If the expiration date on the mailing label is 04/1/2021, 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

Due to COVID 19 restrictions on gatherings of more than 50 people we are not holding our regular meetings on the third Thursday of the month at Rock Valley College. Instead, we are meeting over ZOOM or posting videos on YouTube of the program. 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

President: Jerry Paulson
(815) 222.4414 paulsonjerry@aol.com

Vice president: Constance McCarthy
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Secretary: Cathy Johnson (815) 978.0865
catjohn_22@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Janet Giesen (815) 762.5912
janetgiesen@gmail.com

Board member at-large:
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Board member at-large: Ken Kielsmeier
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APPOINTED COORDINATORS

Booth coordinator: [open position]

Facebook coordinator: Sallie Krebs (815) 540.4730 membershipworrvc@gmail.com

Library coordinator: Ginnie Watson
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Membership coordinator: Sallie Krebs
(as to the left)

Mentor coordinator: [open position]

Merchandise coordinator: Cynthia Chmell
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Native plant sale: Jane Evans (815) 399-3787
javevans9985@comcast.net

Newsletter: editorial coordinator: [open position]

Newsletter: production coordinator: Jessie Crow Mermel (815) 955.0653 serendipitree@gmail.com

Plant rescue/seeds coordinator: Mary Anne Mathwich (815) 721.5187 mprairedock@aol.com

Program committee: Lisa Johnson (chair)
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Mark Luthin (815) 543.7412

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Linda Ricker (217) 649.3966

greencreations.lejoi@gmail.com

Publicity coordinator: Dawn Skupien
(815) 262.7864 dawnskupien@gmail.com

Show Me/Help Me coordinator:
Linda Ricker (as to the left)

Tree & shrub sale coordinators: Brian Hale
(815) 289.2384 moyogi2@gmail.com &
Jerry Paulson (as to the left)

Volunteer coordinator: [open position]

Website coordinator: Janet Giesen (as to the left)

Youth education & grants coordinator: Kim Lowman Vollmer (as to the left)