



# Twin Cities Chapter Quarterly Newsletter

November 2007    Volume 5, Issue 4

## Upcoming Events/Monthly Meetings

### Remaining 2007 plus Winter/Spring 2008 Programs

*(Meetings at the Nokomis Community Center, social at 6:30, meeting to start promptly at 7:00)*

**Tuesday, November 20, Healing Power of Minnesota's Plants.** Join Elizabeth Heck herbal grower, wildcrafter and medicine maker for an introduction to the wonderful world of herbalism. Learn about the remarkable system of natural healing found in Minnesota's woodlands, wetlands and prairies. Herbal preparations from our native plants in teas, tinctures, oils, salves and dried material will be available for us to see, touch, smell or taste. In addition to the presentation, this meeting also includes:

- **Officer Election** (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer). Contact Roberta Moore ([Mylesmom@charter.net](mailto:Mylesmom@charter.net)), if you are interested in more information on any of these positions.
- **Seed Exchange.** Pick up native plant seeds for next year's garden and share any seeds that you may have. Please label any seeds you bring with the common name, scientific name and habitat preference. Bring your offerings in one large container and those interested in taking some seeds home should bring envelopes. Leftover seeds will be donated to schools, nature reserves, etc.

**Tuesday, January 15, Natives' Contribution to Ecological Enhancements in Commercial Areas:** Our members asked for more information on the state of our environment--the big picture. Come learn and be inspired by one organization, Audubon International, is doing something about it, maybe in a location near you. Karen Schragg, manager and naturalist at Woodlake Nature Center in Richfield, is also an environmental steward for Audubon International. She will explain to us ways that native plants are key to ecological improvement in large projects as well as small. We hope our members will take away an increased awareness of current stewardship and advocacy for the environment in recreational and commercially developed areas and how they, themselves, might advocate for environmental protection in public spaces.

**Saturday, February 23, Wild Ones 2008 Native Plant Expo, "Through the Eyes of Nature: The Birds' View of Landscaping".** The 2008 Native Plant Expo jointly sponsored by the Twin Cities and St. Croix Wild Ones chapters will be held at the Radisson Hotel Roseville, 8:30 - 4:30. This full-day event focuses on attracting birds to your yard using the beauty and ecology of natural landscaping through presentations, workshops, and exhibits from native plant and bird experts in our area. The Expo has something for everyone, from beginners to masters of gardens or bird enthusiasts.

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## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!**

The Expo is a huge undertaking for our organization. We need people who are willing to help out in any way possible. If you are interested in doing so, please contact Karen Graham via email at gramkl@comcast.net or by phone at 763-551-9572.

*Expo continued..*

The Wild Ones are pleased to feature two prominent bird and natural landscape speakers. Mariette Nowak, author of *Birdscaping in the Midwest: A Guide to Gardening with Native Plants to Attract Birds*, will speak about "birdscaping" and how easily you can transform your yard into havens for birds and other wildlife. Carrol Henderson of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Non-Game Wildlife Program, author of *Landscaping for Wildlife*, will speak about bird migration patterns, natural landscaping for migratory

birds and the national lights out program to aid migration. We also offer presentations for bird interest on basic landscaping with native plants, creating winter habitat, planting bio-hedges and introducing water features to your yard. Exhibitors from the native plant landscaping and birding fields will show us "how to," "what's new" and everything we can do for the birds!

Join us in exploring how to bring your yard to life with an abundance of birds and native plants throughout the year. (Note: there will be pre-registration for this event so watch for additional information as the date draws closer.)

**March, April, May.** The spring program will offer a series of presentations focusing on various habitats. March: Woodlands; April: Ponds/Wetlands; and May: Prairies. Speakers are still to be determined and we have some great ideas!

## **Presidents' Message - Roberta Moore, Current President**

There's nothing better on a Saturday morning than sipping coffee and watching the birds enjoy my yard. Last Saturday I counted 10 different species fluttering between tree, shrub and feeder. Leaves and flower stalks rustled and swayed as insects and seeds were picked away. What a difference from a few years ago when all I had was a couple of chickadees. I called them Roy and Betty.

It is this enjoyment of nature in my backyard that makes me so pumped about this year's expo. It promises to be packed with information about creating and enhancing bird habitat in your own yard. The expo committee has pulled together a fantastic line up of speakers and workshops. I am so excited I can hardly wait!

The expo committee is looking for your support to make this our best event ever! The committee has divided all the necessary duties into smaller tasks. After all many hands make light work. Please contact Karen Graham to see what you can do to help.



# Meeting Notes

**September Meeting: A Love Affair with Insects: Pollinators, Butterflies and Other Beneficial Insects.** Julia Vanatta and John Arthur, Twin Cities WO chapter members, talked about their love of the insects that inhabit the native gardens on their respective properties. Each had a plethora of photos that celebrated the beauty and variety of tiny creatures they have discovered in their small urban lots. Each speaker's favorite photograph is shown here to give you a feel for the beauty that surrounds them and potentially all of us if we would pause to admire what has been attracted to our yards. To whet your appetites, what follows are tidbits on a number of the creatures that were discussed as well as some words of advice.

- Instead of worrying about that hole eaten away in a leaf of your favorite plant, be more interested in what little creature carved it out. Delight in the chance to explore in your garden.

- Don't worry if you can't identify an insect in your garden. Of the 1.8 million known animals in the world, about 1.2 million are insects. So it's not surprising if you find one that baffles you.

- Look for the "wanna bees" - insects that resemble bees, feed on the nectar and pollen of plants and pollinate plants, but aren't such - as Syrphid and Bee flies.

- Ants are one of the most ubiquitous pollinators and are also great for cleaning up debris.

- Dragon flies are aquatic insects that live most of their lives as larvae underwater, feeding on the larvae of mosquitoes, emerging from the water as adult then flying inland from the water bodies. *(Editor's note: On further reading I discovered that adults have about a 2-month life span whereas for some species the larvae stage can last up to 4 years!!)*

- Dog Day flies (also known as Harvest flies) are cicada which don't have mouths once the mature nymphs surface from underground where they have spent their formative period. Their only interest now is in reproducing.

- Don't rake up those leaves in the fall. Let them all lie in your garden and allow the insects to break them down for you over the fall to early summer time frame. The natural compost also makes great material for insects to over winter.

- Just as a snake outgrows his skin, the monarch butterfly caterpillar sheds its skin a number of times (5) during the larval stage. Each of the five stages is called an instar. You can get an idea of the current stage of a monarch caterpillar by looking at the antenna, which get longer with each instar.

These are just a few of insights that were offered in an evening of great photos and information on the small world that exists in our back yards.

**October Meeting: The Native Garden, A Long-term View.** Susan and Paul Damon. Over the past 14 years, Susan and Paul Damon removed all the non-native plant species from their small corner lot on a busy street in St. Paul and completely surrounded their home with a wide assortment of native flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees. They discovered they had created not only colorful blooming gardens but also a vibrant



Ambush Bug  
with Prey.  
Julia Vanatta



Black-winged Bee  
John Arthur

habitat for wildlife, which delights them year round and meets the approval of their neighbors. Their garden is a certified Monarch Butterfly way-station. While the Damons started with a small garden in the side yard away from the street, they eventually braved hauling away 36 truckloads of buckthorn from a 30-foot tall hedge along the street and rear edge of their property. Now they have even planted the boulevard.

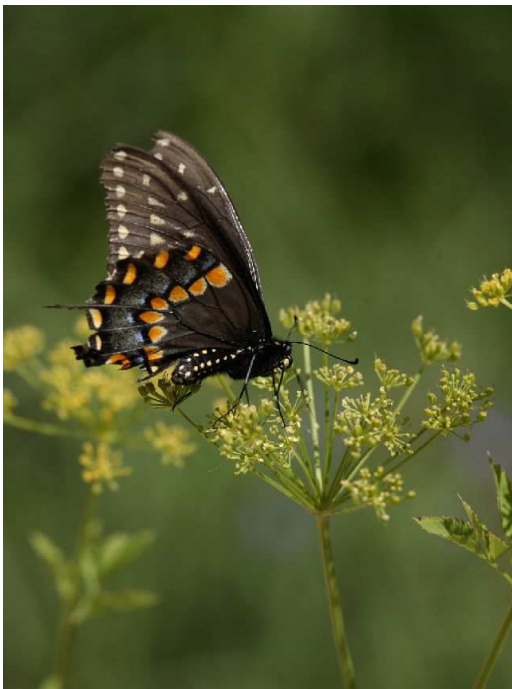
Here are some of the highlights of their presentation: They learn about the plants as they garden and don't hesitate to change their minds and remove problem species. Tall plants in the side yard help obscure a chain-link fence, while a shallow rain garden improves water runoff and keeps ice away from their front entry. They prefer smothering turf grasses with leaves and bark to using herbicides. They found turf grass was too high- maintenance even as a narrow path through the garden. They suggest removing buckthorn before attempting to plant anything else in the area. Clumps of native grasses and (temporary) sunflowers grown from birdseed disguise the rotting stumps. New native shrubs, chosen to provide food for birds, can be planted three feet from the old stumps. Plants, shrubs and under-story trees create a layered habitat that gives cover and nesting sites for birds as well as food. Include water for birds, also. They advise repressing your inner neat-freak. Welcome volunteer plants. Let the garden stand all winter and leave many old stems standing in the spring and summer. Be tolerant of insects. Most problems resolve themselves. They recommend [Insects & Gardens: In Pursuit of a Garden Ecology](#) by Eric Grissell.

**October Plant of the Month:** Joe Pye Weed. Mary Alyce Krohnke gave an overview of Minnesota's two species: Spotted Joe Pye, which does best in sun and wet to mesic soil; and Sweet Joe Pye, which tolerates drier and shadier conditions. Both species are nectar sources for butterflies and provide seed for birds. Their height and lovely flowers make them valuable focal points in the garden.

## Awards and Honors

Wild Ones members have received or, as volunteers, shared in awards in the past few months. We would like to pass on this recognition to you.

1. Citizen Engagement Award. This is one of several awards given by Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) to honor citizens and organizations that have made significant contributions to water quality. Nokomis Naturescape received this award for their work with Minnehaha Creek Watershed District on a number of native plant installations around Nokomis. The Naturescape is the project with the most public volunteer participation and all the gardeners are honored with this award. WO members volunteer at the Naturescape and as a group have taken responsibility for maintaining a section of the gardens.



2. Photo Contest Winner, Wild Ones National convention. John Arthur took first place in the Nature category. The winning photo is shown here. He takes great shots and frequently contributes photographs for our newsletter.

## Member Spotlight - Dave Stack

**Occupation:** Civil Engineering Technician (CAD Designer at Hennepin County Public Works)

**Highlight:** The lives of all our WO members seem to contain something of interest they have done. Dave is no exception in that among other things he was active in the initial stages of rain garden development.

**Length in Wild Ones:** 5 years

### QUESTIONS

Question: How long have you been interested in gardening and what drew you to it originally?

Answer: I've had gardens for about 20 years. I started out strictly with vegetable gardening until 10 years ago, when I began acquiring perennials from neighbors, friends and local sales. Six or seven years ago I got interested in natives. Now I exclusively plant these, though I continue to keep some cultivars and non-natives that I especially like through having long term associations with them.

Question: How would you describe your current garden areas?

Answer: I have the typical 40 foot wide city lot with a 5 foot wide boulevard. In the boulevard I have dug a slight swale for a semi rain garden. It gradually slopes to only an inch or 2 inches below the top of the curb, in order to not make it difficult for anyone stepping out of a parked car. This is just deep enough to catch rain from the sidewalk as well as what falls directly on it. On the other side of the sidewalk in my front yard I have 2 rain gardens - one is 5 by 14 feet and the other 5 by 16 feet and both are around 4 to 5 inches in depth. These are right next to the sidewalk so pedestrians on the sidewalk have rain gardens on both sides. Other than that there are various plantings around the yard, including a shade garden on the north side of the house.

Question: What natives can be found in your garden areas?

Answer: In the shady garden there are trillium, yellow lady slippers, bellwort, wild ginger, wild geranium, Canada anemone, Jack-in-the-pulpit, wild lily of the valley, blood root, Solomon's seal, Virginia bluebells, sweet Cicily, May apple, spiderwort, and three common types of violets. Violets are plants that many people consider to be weeds. However, I am transplanting additional violets to the boulevard to get more short plants in that area. As for the rain gardens, I planted wood lilies, obedient plant, common milkweed, Pennsylvania sedge, coreopsis, New England aster, blue flag iris, black-eyed Susans, purple coneflower, yarrow, golden Alexander, and turtlehead. There are also a couple of volunteers that found there way in - wild sunflowers, narrow leaved coneflower and snake root. I maintain some patches of the old non-natives such as peony, garden phlox, primrose, and sedum.

Question: What non-natives did you root out in changing to a native gardener?

Answer: The major ones were aggressive plants such as orange tawny day lilies, European bellflower and lily of the valley cultivars. I have finally gotten rid of these, but still must weed out a few new sprouts every year. Creeping Charlie, Kentucky blue grass and quack grass continue to give me problems.

Question: I understand that you have a special interest in rain gardens. What might that be?

Answer: By chance, around 1996, an environmental activist named Amy Middleton started a group called Friends of Bassett Creek in my neighborhood just a few blocks from my house. She had obtained some grant money and began holding monthly meetings of this group. It sounded interesting so I joined. She also had another group in the Swede Hollow area of St. Paul. Amy's talks were the first I heard about rain gardens. With some of the group's grant money Amy, Fred Rozumalski, and Sarah Clark wrote a four page informational pamphlet on rain gardens. Besides local distribution of the pamphlet, we also placed a version on the internet. At that time in the 1990's, our pamphlet was one of the first rain garden information sites on the web. A search query for rain gardens would only get about 10 hits, ours being one

of them. How the list has grown as has the interest! Recently I purchased at a bookstore a 180 page book published just this year entitled "Rain Gardens" devoted to rain gardens and other forms of rainwater collection and use. The grant ran out and Amy left after two years, but my interest in rain gardens and Bassett Creek continued. The Friends of Bassett Creek carries on as a more loosely organized group with no paid staff. We do creek cleanups every year; and I have planted natives in an area near the Luce Line where we have removed buckthorn and other invasives. We also promote restoration of the creek; have a Yahoo discussion group; and keep an eye on development along the creek. In addition to these volunteer activities, I personally felt very honored to have an article that I wrote on rain gardens published in the Twin Cities Green Guide and then reprinted in the Southwest Journal.

Question: How do you think the pamphlet and your thoughts on rain gardening have lasted over time?

Answer: The pamphlet has held up pretty well I think. I took a rain garden workshop more recently to see what was currently being taught and it hasn't changed much. Mainly there is more technical information such as on sizing a garden. Also, some literature portrays rain gardens as moist or marshy all the time. With my rain gardens I have learned that they regularly get very dry along with everything else during the long hot summer dry spells. So one needs plants that can withstand wet/dry cycles. Black-eyed Susans, common blue violets, blue flag iris and New England aster do really well in my rain gardens. I often refer to my rain gardens as simply lowered bed gardens because they operate pretty much like a normal garden. Another difference is in approach. Many people seem to install rain gardens in a big project and are finished in a couple of weeks, and this is a very good way to put a rain garden in. However, I have built mine slowly and incrementally year by year, expanding as I acquired more plants.

Question: I understand you are also an avid kayaker. Where do you usually go and do you ever use this to seek out native plants in the wild?

Answer: Actually I have three kayaks for different types of kayaking and to be able to have an extra for a friend to come with me. One is long for Lake Superior and other larger bodies of water, another kayak is short for small winding creeks like Bassett Creek and Minnehaha. I kayak mainly as just an enjoyable pastime, but I do keep an eye out for plants along the shoreline as well mussels in the shallow streams. I've even found a few live mussels in Bassett Creek although they are somewhat hard to locate. I like to kayak the Mississippi River, especially in the gorge of Minneapolis and St. Paul. I also like kayaking on Lake Superior, St. Croix River, Cannon River, Minnesota River and many of the lakes in the area.

## Gardener's To-Do List (November - December - January)

Fall is a busy time of year. Just a few chores done now will pay off in a tidy garden come next spring, and that means less work before you get in there and start digging in the dirt again.

- \* Last call for weeding! Remove tough perennial weeds and you'll thank yourself in the spring. Throw away any seed heads, also any quack grass or bindweed (they may continue to grow in your compost pile); the rest can be composted.
- \* Cut back perennials if you find their yellowed or frost damaged foliage too unattractive; though if they're not diseased you can leave them upright to help trap insulating snow and provide shelter and forage for wildlife.
- \* Clean and organize your garden tools, including draining garden hoses and sprinklers.
- \* Sketch your garden for winter-time planning for expanding your gardens. Try to find room for a rain garden!
- \* Prairies may be cut or burned either now or in the spring.
- \* Apply winter mulch as needed once the soil begins to freeze, or by late November. Most natives should do fine without this.



## Book Review, Internet Info, You Name It!!

As part of the September monthly meeting a list recommended books on insects in the garden was distributed. Highlights from this list are given below.

- **Insects and Gardens, In Pursuit of Garden Ecology**, Eric Grissel, Timber Press, Portland Oregon. (This book is Julia Vanatta's inspiration. It changed her whole approach to gardening.)
- **North Woods Naturalist Guides series**. (Includes such books as Butterflies of the North Woods, Damselflies of the North Woods, Spiders of the North Woods).
- **Landscaping for Wildlife**, Carrol L. Henderson, MN Department of Natural Resources (Recommended in a previous Newsletter).
- **Butterfly Gardening**, Vera Kischik, U of Mn Extension Service.
- **Field Guide to Insects and Spiders of North America**, Arthur V. Evans, Sterling Publishing Company.
- **Garden Insects of North America**, Whitney Cranshaw, Princeton University Press (Especially good pictorial and descriptive information on plant damage and possible cause; however, you need to know that plant the insect is eating to use the identification key).
- **Butterflies of North America**, Jim Brock and Ken Kaufman, Houghton Mifflin Company.
- **Caterpillars in the Field and Garden**, Thomas J. Allen, Jim P. Brock, Jeffrey Glassberg.

## From the Brown Thumb

As this growing season draws to a close I believe I have also completed the initial stages of my grand landscaping plans - removing unwanted plants, getting all the hardscape in and doing some planting in areas which seemed in the most desperate need of help. But mostly what I have done this year and last is dig.

When I first confronted my newly acquired outdoor areas a couple of years ago, they ran the gamut from not too bad looking to complete wilderness. Approached from the front, the yard put on a fairly presentable face to the world. A short slope up to ground level with the house had been removed and replaced with a two tiered retaining wall where non-native flowers had been planted. In addition to this, there was another non-native garden area nestled against the house. The best feature in this part of the yard was a great birch tree, along with a catalpa that I could live with, and one fairly nice looking shrub (which I later discovered was a buckthorn and was subsequently removed - looks can be so deceiving!). The rest was grass which needed little mowing due to the heavy shade caused by neighboring oaks. For this view, however, one needed to gaze beyond the boulevard where scraggly patches of grass interspersed with various weeds resided. It looked quite sad in comparison to neighbors where it was evident that many had partaken in the urban enthusiasm for boulevard planting. The back yard was a truly amazing wild jungle. Here whatever happened to thrive was allowed to do so. Buckthorn and honeysuckle abounded along both fence lines. A small forest of oak, elm and maple was also starting to take hold here as well as along the house and garage.

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In the remaining spaces grass was vying with creeping Charlie and European bellflower. It was quite easy to determine that the back yard was my number one priority with the boulevard next in line. The front yard could certainly limp along for years if that's how long it took for me to get at it.



The first decision that needed to be made was how would I approach this veritable jungle. Felling the forest seemed like the place to begin, so with the help of my husband and a friend one afternoon was spent cutting down all unwanted invasives and any other trees that were less than 3 inches in diameter. Stumps were allowed to remain for the moment unless they were small enough to allow easy removal. That just left me the job of breaking all those branches down into the regulation 4 foot or less length so the garbage folks would haul them away. Weeks later the debris was finally removed. Now all I had to do was clear the yard of the remaining vegetation and remove the stumps, putting in outside living areas as I went along. More on the hardscape additions another time. What I am really working up to is my clearing of the land and the joy it brought me. After going through several options and combinations thereof, including hiring out the whole process, using a roto-tiller, covering it over with plastic or newspaper and wood chips, I opted to hand excavate the entire area, believing that this would be the best way to

really prepare the ground for whatever I decided to plant or build - and besides I am a mighty cheap labor force! So I faithfully chipped away, digging for about 15 to 30 minutes a day, sifting through each spadeful of soil to remove rocks, roots and clumps of sod; digging down deeper where the European bellflower had anchored itself to the ground. I grew to love the feel of the earth and the tracking of root systems to see where they would lead horizontally or just how deeply they had extended themselves. It is incredible what lies beneath the surface and a joy to have personally touched every inch of my little kingdom. Currently about half the area is covered with newspaper and wood chips waiting for planting next spring. The remainder was planted immediately after I was done spading and is surprisingly fairly weed free. Given the time and effort it took, I might not recommend that anyone else approach their entire yard in this manner. However, I do think that digging even a small area gives ones a great appreciation of the complexity of life beneath the surface.

After two plus years I have finished my excavations not only in the back, but also on the boulevard. So as I put my feet up, congratulating myself on a job finally completed, and gaze out at the landscape I have created; my eyes pass over a little patch of untouched ground in the far corner of the back yard. Perhaps I could establish a small swamp area along the fence. It would be nothing to dig up a little area, lay a soaking hose to supply the needed moisture conditions and put in some plants. Then there is the my neighbor's patch of earth between our two houses. It is essentially bare earth with her rain water headed toward us. I think next year I should help her put in a native space. And then of course there is my front yard.... I guess the desire to turn earth will not die easy!

## Featured Native Plant: *Viburnum trilobum*

**Common Name:** High bush Cranberry, American Cranberry, Crampbark

**Scientific Name:** *Viburnum trilobum*      **Family:** Caprifoliaceae

**Habitat:** Found along stream banks and in damp thickets, low woods, swamps and bogs.

## **IDENTIFICATION:**

**Height:** 10-12 feet **Width:** 8-12 feet

**Leaves:** Opposite, simple, 2 to 5 inch-long leaves are dark green turning yellow or red to purple in the fall. They are three lobed, dentate (toothed), and maple-like in appearance. Can distinguish from maple leaves by their somewhat wrinkled surface. The petiole (leafstalk) is grooved and has round, raised glands near the base of leaf.

**Flowers:** White, flat topped, 3-5 inch wide cluster. The large, sterile outer flowers surround a center of fertile flowers. Blooms in late spring/early summer (mid May to mid June)

**Twig:** Light reddish brown. Buds are green and slightly stalked with 2 visible scales.

**Fruit:** Red, translucent drupe (fleshy fruit having a single large seed) is nearly round. It is approximately 1/3 inches across. Matures in September. The bright berries add interest to the winter landscape, until consumed by wildlife.

**Overall characteristics:** Overall this shrub appears as a very dense rounded form which allows it to be used as a hedge or as a solitary plant. Typical growth rate is 12 to 18 inches a year, but can achieve 3 feet in ideal conditions. The bark is gray becoming rough and scaly with age. Flowers are pollinated by insects. Viburnum is Latin for “a kind of shrub“, trilobum means “three lobed“. The common name arose because of the fruit’s similarity to the cranberry in appearance, taste and ripening period.



Photo by John Arthur



Photo by John Arthur

## **GARDEN TIPS**

**Plant Hardiness:** Zone: 2-8

**Sun/Shade Needs:** Sun to partial shade.

**Soil Needs:** Well drained, moist, pH 5.2-7.0.

**Planting:** Plant 4-6 feet apart.

**Propagation:** Easily transplanted. Can propagate by seeds or cuttings. Sow seeds in the autumn. The seeds require cold stratification if started indoors. Cuttings can be done in the summer.

**Care:** Low maintenance and relatively trouble-free. Has shallow roots so may have to water regularly but don’t overwater. If you select the proper location and mulch it, you may not have to water. Little pruning needed; however, older plants may benefit from light pruning. Also may wish to prune for the first few years to let more light into the center of this bush by removing some frail-looking stems and cutting back up to 1/3 of the stems near the crown to encourage growth at the bottom. Do this in early spring prior to bud break or immediately following flowering. Can remove damaged or diseased branches at any time.

**Companion plants:** Ferns under shrub

**Friends & Foes:** Nectar for butterflies, bees and other pollinators. Attracts birds (good nesting sites and cover) and wildlife. Few insect problems. Stem borers can attack, especially if water stressed.

## **NOTES**

**Current Use/Interest:** Fruit is edible, but tart off the bush so not good for direct consumption. Makes great jam, jelly, syrup for pancakes, and liqueurs. Can pick before the first frost, but better after the first frost when are sweeter and more palatable for fresh consumption. Pectin level declines with frost.

**Historical Use/Interest:** Bush was known as cramp bark and was used by Native Americans (as well as herbalists today) to relieve menstrual pains.

## Members Corner

**House For Sale:** Peaceful, secluded home, 60 min. north of downtown Mpls/St. Paul. 2+ BR, 3 baths, walkout, built 1997; 2000 sq. ft; 2 car att. garage; decking on 2 sides, hardwood floors and woodwork; custom energy efficient fireplace. Property includes 25 acres woods, wetland, prairie with multiple native gardens including stream with waterfalls, pond, rain garden, prairie, woodland and bird/butterfly gardens. Certified National Wildlife habitat. >\$350,000. Contact Catherine Harrison 320-629-2231 for further info.

*Editor's Note: A new feature just added! Space below is provided for members who wish to "advertise" anything related to native plants. Some examples of acceptable types of information are plant rescue opportunities, sale of a house that features native plants, plant sales, seminars, and seed/plant give-away. This is offered with the following restrictions*

- 1. Each member may enter one "advertisement" per calendar year.*
- 2. The "advertisement" is limited to 75 words or less.*
- 3. There must be some connection to native plants*

## Market Musings, by Carolyn Harstad

*(Editor's note: Many WO members are master gardeners. This sketch of a day at the market gives a glimpse into an opportunity that helps meet volunteer requirements.. I know members are heading efforts that are more directly linked to native plants. In any case, I hope it inspires others to look at this UofM Extension program.)*

Sitting at yesterday's Farmer's Market was like being in the middle of an international bazaar. Not because of the vendors - most of those were Hmong with a few Minnesota farmers sprinkled in here and there. But the crowd was like the melting pot of America. I saw an Indian couple, the beautiful wife wearing a long flowing dress, discussing broccoli with their typical Indian accent. There were lots of Asians. One Chinese mother had 2 year-old identical twin girls, dressed alike, toddling after her. An American mother had 4 year-old red headed twin girls with different clothing and different hairstyles. I kept looking at those cuties, trying to figure out if they were identical or not. Pretty close if they weren't. But oh, how cute they were. An old white haired Minnesota grandma and grandpa toting their cloth Byerlys grocery store bags went from stall to stall, carefully choosing their vegetables. I saw a handsome Japanese couple, dressed in the latest fashion including spiked high heeled boots on the wife, a multitude of Minnesota housewives in all shapes and sizes wearing everything from the typical jeans, sweatshirt and jacket to outfits that I would wear to church. One platinum blonde bought some corn stalks from the Hmong guy near my table and asked about getting a wreath from him next week. Men wore everything from jeans to overalls to casual business suits and about everything in between. There were couples that I guessed were from Eastern European countries, at least judging from their speech. A man with a British accent stopped to chat with me. One middle aged couple was dressed in clothing that looked like the 1940s styles. The wife even wore a strange wool coat and a hat like I remember my mother wearing. Chunky black shoes. No gloves though! I wondered if she was from a foreign country until she talked. She sounded like a typical Minnesota farm wife. Many women wore the traditional headscarf and long flowing robes of the Middle East. Spanish speaking people with lots of little children in tow, laughed and chatted as they perused the wares in the stands. It was an amazing collage of American ethnic diversity. And oh, it was cold. Most people that stopped at my Master Gardener stand did not have gardening questions. They just stopped to say "You look cold." And I was, even wearing multiple layers of cuddle duds, 2 sweaters, 2 pair of sox, my down coat and a hat, with a blanket over my knees. I am sure I looked like a roly poly little grandma sitting there. My table was at the end of the "corridor" so I think I caught every gust of wind that blew through the Mother Mary Catholic

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Church parking lot. Ominous dark gray clouds scudded overhead and only an occasional patch of bright blue sky peeked through from time to time. About an hour before my 4 hour stint was up, the sun teased me by peeking through, providing that wonderful warmth. But then it would wink and pop back behind the clouds, leaving me shivering again. I had about 15 people stop, but only a few with real gardening questions. Things like "How can I get rid of moles" (he had tried everything I suggested including diazinon in the spring for grub control), what can I plant in a space under the eaves where the rain pours down and the soil is sandy, what shrubs can take a hot dry spot, what perennials will bloom all summer (None. Only annuals will give you bloom all summer) and how late can I cut rhubarb. Questions on natives also arose like what native plants would be suitable for a rain garden, what do I have to do to get an area



ready to plant a prairie and what plants do you recommend?" There was one question on fertilizing that had me observing the produce that surrounded me. The Hmong vegetables are the most gigantic, humongous, beautiful vegetables I have ever seen. I bought a cabbage from the vendor next to me for \$2. It measured 16 inches across, but was thin. Shaped more like a mushroom than a typical round cabbage. The vendor to my right had bright white cauliflower the size of soccer balls. There were trays of parsnips that would win prizes at the State Fair. Onions as big as softballs; huge, fat leeks; kolrabi a good 4-6 inches across. There were many vegetables and herbs I was not familiar with, all beautifully grown. Whatever they use, these people truly outshone the Minnesota farmers for size and quality. An interesting people watching day...

## Welcome New & Renewing Members

As of 1 October 2007 according to the national website, our chapter had 91 active members. Thank you to these new and returning members for their support of Wild Ones. Whether you've just joined or have been a member for several years we look forward to your participation. Besides this newsletter, visit us at [www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities](http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities) <<http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities>>.

Diedre Brennan, Meredith Cooley, Anne & Steve Eckhardt, Mary & Darrell Foss, Lois Hall, Carolyn & Peter Harstad, Esther Hope, Ardis Jacobson, Ed & Rosemary McGlynn, Christian Nelson, Lynn Newman, Mary Nolte, Dena Richards, Linc & Fran Shea, Gigi Siekkinen, Vincent Skemp, Kathy & Brett Smith, Barb Spears, Susan & Todd Troha,

### **2007 Officers**

President: Roberta Moore  
Vice-President: Julia Vanatta  
Secretary: Mary Schommer  
Treasurer: Kris Martinka

### **Board Members**

Hospitality: Rose Meyer  
Membership: Marty Rice  
Merchandise: Kim Medin  
Newsletter: Mary Schommer  
Nokomis Naturescape: Lisa McDonough  
Photographer/Historian: John Arthur  
Plant Rescue: **Unfilled**  
Programs: Mary Alyce Krohnke/John Arthur  
Public Relations: Julia Vanatta  
Show Me, Help Me: **Unfilled**  
Spring Expo: Karen Graham & Susan Damon  
Tours: Carmen Simonet  
Website: Jim Sipe

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Benefits To You**

- Monthly meetings featuring excellent presentation on a wide array of native landscaping topics.
- Receive the new member packet, including our handbook full of information and activities on natural landscaping.
- Receive the Wild Ones journal, with articles and information to inspire and educate you about natural landscaping.
- Free admission to Wild Ones' events, such as our garden tours, and native plant walks and sales/swaps.
- Reciprocity with other chapters' meetings.
- Gather and exchange information and expertise with other gardeners of all experience levels.
- Support for the Wild One's Mission.

### **Join or Renew**

- 1 Sign up at a meetings, or
- 2 Call Marty Rice at 952-927-6531, or
- 3 Access the national website at [www.for-wild.org](http://www.for-wild.org)



**OUR 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.

Twin Cities Chapter  
c/o Marty Rice  
4501 Lakeview Dr  
Edina, MN 55424  
[www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities](http://www.for-wild.org/chapters/twincities)