



Fritillary on Common Milkweed found by Judith in her restored prairie. Photo by Judith Bechtum.



October at the MN Zoo, Apple Valley on the overhead trail.
Photo by Arlene Kjar



The start of the native milkweed species garden by the Conservation Building at the Rice County Fair. Back, l-r, Common, Whorled and Swamp. Front - Butterfly weed. Prairie, Tall Green, Short Green, Showy and others coming in 2024. The goal is to showcase additional milkweeds gardeners may enjoy. The shade loving Poke milkweed also bloomed there this year.



Native Virgin's Bower vine in Norma's yard. Photo by Norma Gilbertson

Prairie Partners Chapter 2023 officers

President – Barb Bolan
Vice President – Nancy Schumacher
Secretary – Pat Johnson
Web Master – Jim Sipe
Treasurer – Jim Sipe
Membership Chair – Ann Dybvik
Newsletter Chair – Ann Dybvik

Wild Ones Mission: Native Plants, Natural Landscaping promote environmentally sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization.

Wild Ones National Address: 2285 Butte des Morts Beach Road, Neenah, WI 54956
www.wildones.org

Membership: Sign up/ renew online at <https://members.wildones.org/> or by mail: <https://members.wildones.org/renew-by-check/>. Cost is \$40 per year for a household (family) membership. Student and other membership types are also available.

SE MN Prairie Partners Mission Statement: To preserve, maintain and provide knowledge of native and restored plant communities in a way that fosters friendship.

SE MN Prairie Partners online:

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

[Wild Ones: SE MN Prairie Partners | Facebook](#)

Newsletter Committee: Lead: Ann Dybvik, Chief Photographer: Bruce Dybvik, Committee: Nancy Schumacher, Gary Bullemer, Barb Bolan

Submitting articles for the newsletter – We welcome stories about natural areas, a native garden you have visited or designed, a nature-based vacation, a special flower, bird, butterfly, etc. Please contact Ann Dybvik at anndbvk@gmail.com to discuss your ideas.

Prairie Partners member local Services

(Please let us know if you have one to list)

Minnesota Native Landscapes (MNL): Dwayne Vosejka mnlcorp.com

Friends of Nerstrand State Park: Katy Gillispie
[Friends of Nerstrand Big Woods](#)

Friends of Whitewater State Park: Joel Dunnette - [Friends of Whitewater](#)

Zumbro Valley Audubon: Joel Dunnette – Board member zumbrovalleyaudubon.org

River Bend Nature Center, www.rbnc.org
Packy Mader, Board of Directors

Enabling Healthy Habitats: Dawn Littleton

Halfpint Hollow Miniature Donkeys: Rod and Sue White halfpinthollow.com

CRP – Clean River Partnership: Bill Jokela
[Home - Clean River Partners](#)

Member-Sponsored-Native Garden program – Get paid to plant natives!

We are offering up to 5 native garden grants, for reimbursements of up to \$200@ for native plants purchased and installed in your yard or landscape project again in 2024. The gardener must either be a member or be sponsored by a member. Please contact Barb Bolan at bdbolan@hotmail.com for an application.

Upcoming 2024 Chapter Programs –
Inside, in-person events will typically be held in the Emmaus Church at 712 Linden St. North.

January 11 - Shoreline restoration with native species – zoom presentation, by DNR.

January TBD – Joint zoom call with Master naturalists on maintaining remnant prairie ditches project in Rice County.

February 8 – Heather Holm zoom presentation; she will be online to answer questions.

March 14 – Nancy Schumacher – Native seed harvesting and saving.

April 11 - Annual anniversary dinner – Fireside Restaurant, Dennison, MN.

late April – ephemerals tour – River Terrace SNA – Cannon Falls.

May 18 – Native Plant Sale – led by Nancy S.

Prairie Partners Board meetings are open to all chapter members.

Prairie Partners October Board Meeting abbreviated notes

In attendance: Barb Bolan (President), Nancy Schumacher (Vice President), Ann Dybvik (Membership and Newsletter), Jim Sipe (Treasurer and Webmaster), Pat Johnson (Secretary), and Breanna Wheeler

Secretaries Report: Minutes of July 2023 meeting were circulated by Pat Johnson prior to the meeting and were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Combined accounts total \$18,607.20. It was noted that there are a number of expenses to be paid very soon.

These include funds to Carleton for the memorial for Chuck Carlin, funds for the Heather Holm butterfly and bird books, newsletter expenses, and book expenses for the Little Library project.

Member Sponsored Native Gardens: We will continue this program in, we are offering \$200 for up to 5 grants total.

Membership Update: We have 63 active household memberships. We need to recruit new officers and board members. We will put a free membership offer in the 19 copies of *Nature's Best Hope* by Douglas W. Tallamy which will be placed in the Little Libraries.

Plant Sale: Our native plant sale will be on May 18, with Nancy Schumacher leading again. For now, the plan is to repeat last year's highly successful sale.

Materials for working tables at events: We discussed various materials that we might be able to use. Breanna will look into some various banners. Jim and Nancy are looking into a smaller tri-fold poster board that would fit on a table and be simpler than our current setup.

Memorial donations for Chuck Carlin

Our chapter received about \$1000 in memorials for member Chuck Carlin. Chuck, a former professor at Carleton, loved native plants, natural areas, arboretums, and keeping things local. He and his wife Carolyn put in beautiful native gardens in their yards and other places. We have honored Chuck by gifting the money to the Carleton Arboretum to use for a new native prairie they are planting.



Wild Rye in Belmont Park.
By Elise Hachfeld



Breanna Wheeler delivering 3 nature books to one of 19 little libraries in the area.

Sharing the Excitement of Native Plants Using Little Libraries by Breanna Wheeler

In the past, the SE MN Prairie Partners Chapter of Wild Ones has made donations of books and movies to local libraries and nature centers to share the mission of Wild Ones with others. This year, we decided to expand the idea and purchase books to distribute in area Little Libraries. We chose three books for different audiences - “Plant a Pocket of Prairie” by Phyllis Root for children, “Nature’s Best Hope” by Doug Tallamy for adults and “Nature’s Best Hope (Young Reader’s Edition)” by Sarah L. Thomson.

With chapter monies, the books were purchased; Pat Johnson purchased card holders and secured them inside each book. Breanna Wheeler secured a donation of native seed packets from Minnesota Native Landscapes and Pat put a packet in each book’s card holder pocket. She attached a label that shares that the book was donated by our chapter with more information for readers to learn more about joining Wild Ones and our chapter activities.

In addition, Breanna designed and printed a card for the pockets of each of the “Nature’s

Best Hope” books telling more about our chapter and Wild Ones. It also advertises that the first three people that visit the website or call to inquire about membership will receive a free annual membership which will be funded by our chapter.

Breanna spent some time researching Little Libraries and their locations and set out over the first part of November placing the books. As a result, there are four in Northfield, one in Dundas, two in Faribault, two in Owatonna, one in Pine Island, one in Nerstrand, one in Farmington, two in Lakeville, two in New Prague, one in Randolph, one in Cannon Falls, and one in Hampton, MN.

We are looking forward to seeing if our idea to include three free memberships will generate any readers to contact us and expand interest!

We also have a copy of each of the three books available for members to borrow. Please contact Barb Bolan if you would like to borrow any of them.

Oronoco Native planting



Member Dawn Littleton has initiated native garden plantings by the Oronoco city hall. Our SE MN Prairie Partners Board voted to offer plants and money to help her with it. Dawn is putting in two native beds, one is 3’x20’ the other is 8’x20’. She would love assistance from anyone that is available and interested in helping this succeed! These will be on display for Oronoco’s annual Gold Rush Days in August. Please let us know if you are available and interested in helping with this project.

Road trip to New England 2023

By Sue White



Schoodic Point, Acadia National Park, Atlantic Ocean



Schoodic Point, Acadia National Park, Maine. Spruce trees and wild asters have taken a foothold in the granite rock.

Rod and I “retired” from our retirement hobby of raising miniature donkeys this year. We only retained a few of our old timers as pets. With some of our “donkey money” we bought a used Big Foot RV camper and took off last fall with our dogs, Barnaby and Mazie, for New England. We were able to camp at gorgeous sites in half a dozen different state parks along the way. When in our home state of Maine, we met up with friends and relatives and visited some of our favorite haunts in northern Maine and on its coast. Here is a sampling of our trip:



Reindeer moss along Park Loop Road, Acadia National Park, Maine. By Sue White



Rod with Barnaby and Mazie at Dry River Campground, Crawford Notch State Park.



Rod pressing cider in northern Maine. The heirloom McIntosh apples were from a century old tree. Most delicious apples I have ever had!



Mushrooms growing on dead stump, Crawford Notch State Park, NH



Beautiful floral display From Chanticleer Gardens in Wayne, PA. Photo by Laura Teele

Laura Teele says she was fortunate to have a great trip to Philadelphia to explore Longwood, Chanticleer, Winterthur, Nemours, Mt. Cuba & Hagley Museum. Lots of fascinating DuPont family history and a fantastic variety of gardens and natural areas! Here are a few photo highlights of her trip.



from Winterthur Museum & Garden in Winterthur, DE. Photo by Laura Teele



From Chanticleer Gardens in Wayne, PA. Photo by Laura Teele



Smooth Blue Aster (*Symphotrichum* leave). Photo by Elise Hachfeld

Panacled Aster (*Symphotrichum lanceolatum*) in Judith Bechtum's prairie - one of the delights of having native prairies is finding new species, such as this one for Judith in her prairie. Photo by Judith Bechtum



Participation in the Bumble Bee Atlas project by Barb Bolan



Common Eastern Bumblebee (*Bombus impatiens*) worker bee waking up after being chilled. It was found feeding on Rattlesnake master flower.

In 2023 I participated as a volunteer in the U of MN Bee Atlas project. My roughly 2-hectare site to survey, was part of the prairie of River Bend Nature Center in Faribault. Two or three times a season, the volunteer surveyors find and gently capture, usually with nets, any bumblebees found and put them on ice to chill. The plant species they are found on is noted, as are surrounding habitats and species. The chill-down doesn't hurt the bees, just calms them down to allow photographing. Once they warm up, they stretch, wiggle a bit, and then fly off to hit more flowers. Data and photos are submitted, experts at the University Bee lab verify or correct identities (I wasn't always correct), and the data is compiled with other reports to help determine the populations and habits of our native bees. I visited the site three times. The first time, July 5th, I was very surprised to find no bumblebees, perhaps due to the excessive heat. On July 29th I had better luck, reporting 14, and on my final visit, on August 25th, I netted 5 bumblebees. Bumblebees found were identified as the Common Eastern, Two-spotted, Brown belted and half-black. Nothing uncommon.



Half-black Bumblebee on *Tithonia*. *Tithonia* is a loved garden flower that is popular with pollinators. It is native to southern US. Photo by Laura Teele



Queen Bumblebee for 2024 looking for a winter home. Photo by Barb Bolan



Bumblebee on Virginia Waterleaf last May. Photo by Arlene Kjar

Ducks and Duck Decoys - Gary Bullemer



One of the beautiful hand carved Wood duck decoys Gary created.

I started making decoys in 1998, after getting the book "Making Decoys" by Grayson Chesser and have made 155 full sized, and 204 mini sized ducks.

Marv Bernet, 'the Godfather of MN decoy makers', and a truly special guy, has given me some great tips and constructive criticism over the years.

After the first two or three I made in 1998, I started making the decoys with the same trademarks - hollowed out, with two pennies inside and a written message....my "two cents worth"

The two wood ducks that I used to demonstrate the decoy making process will be donated to Northfield area Ducks unlimited and Blue Earth County Pheasants Unlimited for silent auctions.



More of Gary's decoys and carving supplies.



Gary explains his sanding process to Scott.
Photo by Bruce Dybvik

Seed Share – November 2023

We had seeds of over three dozen different native species offered for sharing at the November event. Lots of fun and learning! Thank you, Nancy, for sharing your knowledge and leading the seed share event!



Seed share table behind some of the event participants as Jake Froyum is being introduced. Photo by Bruce Dybvik

Starting a native prairie - Jacob Froyum



Jake Froyum provided us with an excellent, detailed, and informative presentation about starting and maintaining a native prairie.

Jake conveyed the importance of choosing the right site for a prairie project, while considering sunlight, maintenance, and site preparation. "The better site prep a person does the better the future prairie." The right seed mix, and timing of seeding are critical considerations. If you are planning a native prairie project in Rice, Goodhue or Scott Counties, Jake is an excellent resource to contact.



Jerry and Audrey Wicklund received the 'Certificate of Recognition' from the Nature Conservancy this fall!



Beaver Dam at the Wicklunds place. Photo by Jerry Wicklund



Using fire to manage the native prairie.
Photo by Jerry Wicklund



Beehives and bluebird houses. The Wicklunds put up bluebird and wood duck houses in addition to hosting honeybee hives. Photo by Jerry Wicklund



What's in my bluebird house? Tree swallows use feathers, chickadees like moss and down, wrens prefer sticks, house sparrows use grass and junk, cowbird eggs are big and stand out. Bluebirds build neater cup nests of fine grasses and pine needles and typically lay blue eggs (rarely white).



Restoring his farm to native plants and trees allows wildlife, such as turkeys, pheasants, and wood ducks to thrive on the property. And that makes for successful hunts for Vets and the Governor open. Photo by Jerry Wicklund



Frog in a bird house. Photo by Arlene Kjar



Puffball snowman. Photo by Laura Teele



Ghost Pipe mushroom. Photo by Laura Teele



Puffball art – huge puffball, well past edible stage. Photo by Laura Teele



Shaggy Mane mushrooms.



Lichens on a branch at Belmont Park, Apple Valley. Photo by Elise Hachfeld

Pheasant backs mushrooms decorated under a maple tree can become nature's art. Photo by Barb Bolan



Grassland Ecosystems by Ken Kirton

Grass has been present on planet earth for about one hundred million years, and in North America for 20 to 30 million years. Grass occupies about forty percent of plant cover on the earth.

Annual precipitation, soil type, and topography, along with fire and the presence of grazing animals have been major determinants of the presence of grass. These factors have co-evolved in many instances and have caused grass to evolve in many ways. For example:

- 1) Location of the meristematic tissue (growing point) near the ground level in the plant. Above ground tissue becomes dormant during winter.
- 2) Development of C4 metabolism.
- 3) Adaption of long narrow leaves with the ability to roll during dry weather, to conserve moisture, and with silica crystals as a deterrent to grazing.
- 4) Extensive, deep, roots, a clump growth pattern, as well as the use of stolon and rhizomes as means of propagation.
- 5) Adoption of wind pollination. This is characterized by flowers without scent or petals, and large amounts of pollen that can be easily transferred by wind. Wind pollinated plants often have large anthers, and elaborate stigma, located on large linear florets. In many instances wind pollination may have evolved before insects were present.



Spiders, insects, birds and small mammals and other critters need grasslands. Here a garden spider attaches one side of its web to grass.



Bison, native grazers of our prairies. Photo by Gail Gates, Spring Lake Park Reserve, Dakota County



Indian grass - note the tall, wave-in-the-wind-to-spread pollen inflorescence. Photo by Elise Hachfeld



A prairie burn at Lashbrook a few years ago to keep the prairie healthy. Photo by Ken Kirton

C4 vs C3 grasses – Refers to how many Carbon atoms are used in the early phase of photosynthesis.

C4: Warm season. Sprout later in season, require more sunlight, thrive in higher temperatures and are more frost sensitive. Examples: Bluestems, side oats grama, switchgrass

C3: Cool season – sprout earlier, may die back during summer heat, and handle frost better. Examples: Kentucky bluegrass, fescues, rye grass

Knowing if invasives in a prairie are warm or cool season can help determine timing of control burns.

Return Address:

Barb Bolan
9700 Baldwin Ave
Ave Northfield, MN 55057

Address Label



Bird's nest in Lashbrook park. Likely a Rose breasted Grosbeak nest. Photo by Fred Stanley



Hungry starlings. Though not native, these birds are very common most everywhere. However, the young or non-breeding adults, in their fancy feathers, look so different than breeding stage adults. Photo by Nancy Schumacher



Off Park Loop Road, Acadia National Park, Maine. Sue White



Great tailed grackles, Galveston, TX. Distinguished from Boat tailed grackles by yellow eyes. Photo by Barb Bolan



Bristle thistles (*Cirsium horridulum*) in flower. For some reason I love native thistles, and these caught my eye in Galveston, TX. Photo by Barb Bolan

Downy Wood Mint in Norma's Lawns to Legumes planting. Photo by Norma Gilbertson

