

# **WILD ONES.** **Reflections**

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF PRESERVING AND RESTORING BIODIVERSITY  
OF OUR NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES, BEGINNING IN OUR OWN YARDS AND GARDENS.

## **Why WILD ONES Matters**

Dynamic Duo  
**From a Plant's Point  
of View, Specialist Bees  
Are a Benefit**

Garden Showcase  
**Adventures in Turning  
Lawn to Prairie**

The Curiosity Corner  
**Jumping Worms**





Bur oak  
Image: Leslie Pilgrim

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"As 'Wild Ones' we get native plants  
growing like no other organization."

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Cover photo: John Arthur  
Variegated meadowhawk (*Sympeitrum corruptum*) on a  
purple prairie clover (*Dalea purpurea*).

## WHY DOES WILD ONES MATTER?

Roger Miller, *Wild Ones St. Croix Oak Savanna chapter*

**As a homeowner and gardener,** I believe Wild Ones is unique because we get native plants in the ground like no one else. We not only have a national presence and visibility from which to advocate effectively for native plants, we also have a powerful local presence across the country through our 65 chapters in 23 states, and nearly 6,000 memberships. So, how do we get plants in the ground? In our neighborhoods and communities, we explain and demonstrate the importance of native plants. We volunteer as individuals and through our local chapters, and we partner with regional growers and like-minded organizations. Imagine if we totaled-up all the native plants going into gardens and landscapes this year as the result of Wild Ones. The number would be in the hundreds of thousands. Maybe more. Start with the plant sales Wild Ones sponsors or supports across the country. Add the planting we do in our individual yards and gardens, and the community gardens we steward through Wild Ones. Finally, think of all the individuals who have drawn knowledge and inspiration from our work and then sought out and planted native plants for themselves this year. The numbers start to add up. So celebrate. As “Wild Ones” we get native plants growing like no other organization!



Monarch and Bumble Bee on New England Aster.  
Image: Howard Markus

**“The GREATEST THREAT to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.” Robert Swan, British polar explorer and environmentalist.**



**FREE AND OPEN TO ALL RAIN OR SHINE**

**Landscape Revival  
OAKDALE**

**Saturday June 4, 2022  
9am - 1 pm**

**New Location  
Oakdale Fire Station #1  
5000 Hadley Ave. N.  
Oakdale**

**Landscape Revival  
SHOREVIEW**

**Saturday June 11, 2022  
9am - 1 pm**

**Shepard of the Hills  
North Paking Lot  
3920 Victoria St. N.  
Shoreview**

One example of how we get “roots in the ground.” Volunteers from various Wild Ones chapters work with other local groups to host the annual Landscape Revival Native Plant Expo and Market. Now in its 11th year, local native plant nurseries and environmental organizations join together to offer educational information on native plants while also offering a market in which to actually purchase native plants.

## FROM A PLANT'S POINT OF VIEW, Specialist Bees Are a Benefit

*By Dave Crawford, Wild Ones St. Croix Oak Savanna chapter*

**Let's suppose** you're shopping for hot sauce. You probably have a favorite brand. You may be very firm about it. Let's say you'd definitely buy Tabasco, but you'd rarely buy any other brand. To the manufacturer of Tabasco, you're a more valuable customer because you stick to that brand.

Now let's say you're a bee. You could eat nectar and pollen from any flower you find, or you could have "brand loyalty." Let's say you always do your dining at prairie clover, as long as it's available. From a plant's point of view, you're a valued customer if you most often dine at the same species, because you're more likely to spread that species' pollen to other flowers of the same species, where it can pollinate those flowers' seeds.

Sunflower-burrowing resin bees specialize on pollen from sunflowers (*Helianthus*), early sunflower (*Heliopsis*), coneflowers (*Rudbeckia*), and rosinweeds (*Silphium*).



Certain bee species do have brand loyalty, particularly when it comes to pollen. It's more than just a bee figuring out the most efficient way to get food from a particular size and shape of flower, and then sticking with that flower species because it's familiar and easy. Some bee species intentionally seek pollen from certain plant species right at the start.

*Colletes aberrans*, with the unimaginative common name “aberrant cellophane bee,” seeks out pollen from prairie clover (*Dalea* species). Just as you’ll find monarch caterpillars munching on milkweed and nowhere else, you’ll find *Colletes aberrans* foraging for food on prairie clover flowers. It’s not just a preference, it’s effectively a dietary requirement.

### **The Polylecty – Oligolecty Spectrum: Degrees of Pollen Specialization**

Among native bee species, some forage on any flower species they can get at effectively. Our many species of bumblebees are one example. They fall near the polylecty (meaning: gather from many) end of the spectrum. Any pollen and nectar will do. Aberrant cellophane bees fall near the oligolecty (gather from few) end. Bee species at the extreme oligolectic end of the spectrum, collecting pollen from just one species, are described as monolectic, although that term is sometimes also applied to bees who take pollen from only a single genus, like aberrant cellophane bees on *Dalea* species.<sup>1</sup>

Prairie clover gets a benefit from aberrant cellophane bees because they focus just on prairie clover flowers. No side trips to other flowers, no pollen wasted by being delivered to the wrong address.



Thistle longhorn bees are specialists on pollen from thistles.



Hairy-banded mining bees provision their nest cells with pollen mainly from asters and goldenrods.

## Bee Lawns and Pollen Specialists

As an effort to make lawns less harsh on the environment and more useful to pollinators, bee lawns are an improvement on pure turf grass. But how many North American bee species are specialists on European white clover, creeping thyme, or dandelions? These plant species can benefit generalist bees, but offer

Bumblebees are non-specialists. Pollen from most any flower will suit them. Pictured here: boreal (above) and brown-belted (below) bumblebees on native field thistle.

Pollen is a source of protein, which is critical for reproductive success, while nectar mainly provides carbohydrates. Aberrant cellophane bees (pictured far right on native downy prairie clover) are pollen specialists. They seek pollen only from the genus *Dalea*. Note: all photos courtesy of Dave Crawford.



virtually nothing for specialists. Thirty to fifty percent of native bees specialize to some degree. For the greatest support to bee diversity and nutrition, your efforts will pay off more if you plant gardens that include a wide diversity of native plant species.



### What's in it for the Bees?

The benefits to a bee who's a pollen specialist are still being researched. It may be that the pollen of certain flowers is easier to digest for certain bee species, or that it provides critical micronutrients not found in other pollen.<sup>2</sup> Or it may be that specialist bees simply don't recognize other flowers as food sources at all. Bees respond to olfactory cues in the scent emitted by flowers, and some scents may be interpreted as "yum," while others are more like "yuck," or perhaps just "meh".

<sup>1</sup> In North America, one example of a thoroughly monoleptic species is the pickerelweed shortface bee (*Dufourea novaeangliae*), which forages only on the species *Pontederia cordata*, pickerelweed.

<sup>2</sup> Some bee species have specialized shapes to their legs that are perfectly matched to the most efficient way to loosen pollen from just one or a few flower species.

## Adventures in Turning Lawn to **PRAIRIE**



Inset: The Larson property in 2015. Large photo: The Larson property several years later.

**I**t's a sunny but cool November day, and I've just come inside. I was sitting on the bench at the top of the hill behind our house, watching and listening. From the small wooded area behind the bench I could hear nuthatches, woodpeckers, and squirrels busily moving about. Looking down past the house's roofline, I could see our vegetable garden and our one acre prairie restoration spread below me. Gazing upward, I had a view of the St. Croix River Valley. I could see the

immense sky to the east, quiet, then with a few clouds, where we can see many wonders: birds, both local and migrating, such as eagles, cranes, and swans; sunrises; stars; thunderstorms with towering clouds and lightning (as far away as Eau Claire, Wisconsin), and rainbows.

I love my "aerie on the hill" where I can observe the natural world around me. I am so grateful for the path that brought my husband and me to this small piece of land seven years ago. And I am hopeful that the restoration projects we've been working on here are making a difference.

This path began in 1997 when I bought a children's garden kit as a fun project for our three kids. We prepared a little garden in the backyard of our Minneapolis home and planted the assortment of seeds that came in the kit. Some of the seeds grew into plants, which we watched and weeded from time to time. The plants of one variety, Mexican sunflower, grew very tall and had a profusion of bright orange flowers in the late summer. It was fun to have such success, and we admired the flowers. And then we experienced what we thought was truly remarkable—monarch butterflies appeared, many of them, and they visited the orange flowers and fluttered around the yard for days.

### **The Experience was an Epiphany**

I don't know if my kids remember this little garden, but the experience was an epiphany for me—the idea that you could successfully attract wildlife if

you could provide the right plant. I had grown up gardening with my mother, and continued gardening as an adult. But I had always thought of gardening as something to do for people—growing either pretty flowers or vegetables. I had never seen anything that attracted butterflies like this before and I wanted to learn more.



Top: The view from a favorite bench vantage point that looks out across the valley.

Bottom: The second growing season in 2017. "It was so pretty that we were sad to see it mowed shortly after this photo was taken." Yarrow, black-eyed Susan, and little bluestem are doing well.

I headed off to the library and started checking out all the books I could find on gardening for butterflies and other wildlife. I wanted to create a yard filled with life! I found plans for butterfly gardens that described planting marigolds and cosmos, and plants I wasn't familiar with like bee balm and butterfly milkweed. It wasn't long before I came across the book [Noah's Garden](#) at the library. This book introduced me to the importance of planting native plants. I learned that non-native plants, for example the Mexican sunflower which is native to Central America and Mexico but not the U.S., can attract butterflies but may not offer the right sustenance at the right time. Visits to a non-native plant may not necessarily indicate that it actually offers the habitat and sustenance local wildlife need. Now I wanted to learn more about *native plants*.

## An Organization Called Wild Ones

Not too long after I read this book, I saw a poster on the bulletin board at Southdale Library that caught my eye. An organization called Wild Ones was going to have an event at the library, free and open to all. I marked my calendar, showed up, and discovered a wonderful group of people who were excited to share their knowledge of native plants. As I recall, I joined the Twin Cities chapter that day in 2001. I have been a member of Wild Ones ever since.

I learned so much through *Wild Ones*—from the meetings, conferences, field trips, garden tours, publications, as well as from volunteering at the Nokomis Naturescape in Minneapolis. It wasn't long before I was buying native plants and planting them in my small Minneapolis yard. Gradually the lawn area got smaller as my native plant beds grew larger.

As the years went by and our kids headed off on their own, our family house started to feel too big. My husband Steve, who initially seemed bemused by my interest in native plants, became an enthusiast himself after hearing Dr. Douglas Tallamy's talk at a Wild Ones Design with Nature conference. The two of us loved living in Minneapolis, but began thinking that we might enjoy a place with a smaller house and a larger lot where we could do more gardening and maybe some ecological restoration. An interesting property was available north of Stillwater near the St. Croix River. It was somewhat hilly land with about an acre of woods and an acre of very sunny lawn. The owners had little interest in gardening so the lawn was an expanse of grass. We liked the idea of having a blank slate. We could picture converting the lawn into



The fifth growing season in 2020. A better balance of grass and forbs. Vervain, monarda, and fewer yarrow and black-eyed Susan.

a prairie with a vegetable garden area. And we imagined removing the thick buckthorn from the woods and eventually having a lovely woodland area to share with the local wildlife.

Soon after our move to May Township, we learned that the Washington Conservation District and our local watershed district offered “Turf to Prairie” cost-share programs for lawns greater than one acre in size. The program covered most of the cost of the prairie installation and three years of maintenance

by a contractor. We applied and were thrilled to be approved. Minnesota Native Landscapes, Inc. (now MNL), took on our project. By the end of our first summer our lawn was dead and ready for fall seeding.

### **Patience is Required for a Turf to Prairie Project**

In the next few years we learned that patience is required for a turf to prairie project. The first growing season things looked pretty dire. We hadn’t met many of our neighbors and we wondered what they thought of our project. When I introduced myself to one of our neighbors, he asked “do you live where the napalm bomb went off?” That was actually a pretty good description and we both laughed. Things were very patchy—cover crops, invasive plants, and areas where nothing was growing. MNL provided maintenance, and we assisted by hand-pulling unwelcome plants such as mullein, yellow nutsedge and sandbur (a native, but the burs are too sharp to have around).

It wasn’t all that long before we made it through the “first year sleep,” the “second year creep,” and started enjoying the “third year leap” stage. By the third summer, the warm season grasses such as little bluestem, sideoats grama, and big bluestem were really taking off. The monarda, black-eyed Susan, oxeye (or false) sunflower plants were blooming away. Neighbors started commenting on how much they enjoyed walking past the prairie because it “smells wonderful” and was “so alive with wildlife.”



A burn on the one-acre prairie.

**As we work to restore the ecology of our small property, observing wildlife brings us great joy. Some of our more notable observations include:**

- 🌿 Spotting a bluebird (our first!) sitting on a fence post the day after we put the post into the ground. Then later on, watching bluebird, chickadee and wren parents raise their young in our bluebird houses. We've installed several "perching posts" (made from dead buckthorn trees trimmed and staked to rebar posts) for the bluebirds, who like to sit on high spots and look for insects on the ground. We've seen a whole lineup of bluebird parents and fledglings sitting on a perching post.
- 🌿 Seeing Baltimore orioles pull strips off of the previous season's swamp milkweed stems to use in their nest construction. They will gather up a number of the strips in their beaks and off they go.
- 🌿 Noticing a young fawn who hunkered down in the prairie while its mother was out and about. Several times we've seen groups of fawns bounding around in the prairie. It looks like so much fun.
- 🌿 Seeing a turkey roaming around on the top of the hill, and then realizing she had a nest up there. She sat on the nest for weeks while incubating her eggs: a model of patience. This summer and fall we've had a group of two hens and seventeen young turkeys who regularly visit.
- 🌿 Enjoying the many great spangled fritillary butterflies that fluttered about and sipped nectar from the butterfly milkweed and oxeye sunflowers this year. It was fun to walk along our prairie path surrounded by the butterflies.
- 🌿 Seeing pollinators galore, especially bees of all shapes and sizes. Some of the most visited plants seem to be partridge pea, monarda, and the goldenrods. We noticed odd holes in some plants in the woods—a sign of leafcutter bees—and then I actually saw a bee carrying a leaf chunk into a hole.
- 🌿 Seeing reptiles and amphibians—a milk snake and a bull snake this summer—lots of toads, a few skinks. We hear tree frogs but rarely spot them.
- 🌿 Checking photos from a camera trap we put up in the woods is always interesting. The camera has captured images of foxes, raccoons, opossums, rabbits, woodchucks, deer, and unfortunately quite a few cats (barn cats from up the road). Black bears ramble through occasionally looking for bird feeders.
- 🌿 On a few dewy mornings this summer backlighting from the sun made hundreds of beautiful spider webs visible. We had no idea there were so many spiders around. Many of the webs were on last year's monarda stalks. Another reason to avoid trimming old stalks.
- 🌿 Enjoying magical summer nights when twinkling fireflies fill the air.
- 🌿 Spotting interesting insects such as a walking stick and a great black wasp.

This past summer was our sixth growing season on the prairie. Every year has been different. This summer the lack of rain had a big impact. Most of the grasses were much shorter than usual but still strived to produce seedheads. The prairie didn't look as green as usual because last year's dried up grasses were showing above this summer's grasses. Some of the forbs (flowering plants), initially dried up, then grew again later in the summer and produced small flowers. But the prairie was still alive with pollinators and other wildlife. Quite different from our neighbors' quiet lawns. We've encountered a number of challenges to the success of our prairie along the way, including deer, pocket gophers, invasive plants, and uncooperative weather. We try doing what we can, but we realized that sometimes we just have to adjust our attitude and trust that things will work out with time. For the deer who browse on just about everything, we've learned to always fence the things we really care about, especially small trees and shrubs. That takes a lot of enjoyment out of planting new areas so this fall we put up a deer enclosure fence around part of the yard near the house. We're hoping that we can restore a woodland area there without the deer getting involved.



Woodland fungi, 2021. The Larsons spotted this spectacular fungus in their woods this fall.

### **Pocket Gophers**

Pocket gophers are quite active in our prairie and quickly create big mounds of dirt as they excavate their tunnels. It's annoying to have circles of established prairie plants destroyed, but

we're trying to accept that maybe this disturbance is good and gives an opportunity for pioneer plants in the prairie. We've read that the gophers are beneficial components of ecosystems because they help aerate the soil. Their abandoned tunnels provide habitat for other species and the waste left behind fertilizes the

soil. With time, maybe they will move on. Our sighting of the bull snake this summer indicates that some predators might help out with our pocket gopher “problem.”

We constantly keep an eye out for unwanted plants in the prairie. When we spot patches of birdsfoot trefoil, crown vetch, yellow nutsedge, red clover, mullein, garlic mustard, Canada thistle, and foxtail grass we try to hand-pull them as soon and as completely as possible to keep them under control. Creeping Charlie is more challenging. We’ve got some fairly big patches of it in some of the shady areas and we haven’t yet come up with a solution for that. Tall goldenrod (in the “Canada goldenrod complex”) is a native plant that is great for pollinators, but it aggressively spreads through its rhizomes and seeds. There was a lot of it on the property when we arrived, which we thought was great. However, we are trying to keep it out of our one acre prairie area because we know it would crowd out other plants.

Our biggest plant problems are the European cool season grasses that are starting to take over in some areas. We plan to do a burn in the spring which will hopefully set them back. We would really like to avoid using herbicides but that may be necessary for these grasses. We recently listened to a Wild Ones talk by Larry Weaner and were interested to hear him say that plants with taproots such as butterfly milkweed and *Baptisia* (such as wild cream indigo) can compete with cool season grasses. We’ll look into that more positive route next summer.

## Our Future Plans

As for our future plans, we plan to continue to add more native species to both the prairie and other areas. We’ve been planting an assortment of shrubs to create a bird thicket that can gradually replace the screen of buckthorn between us and our neighbors. We’re excited about our new deer enclosure fence. Over the winter we’ll be working on a landscaping plan for the enclosed area. This will be an opportunity to do more with woodland plants, and maybe even add a water feature. We’ll continue to work on removing invasive and unwanted plants, especially the buckthorn. And, as always, we’ll keep watching and listening for wildlife, **because helping the wildlife is really what this is all about.**



The Larsons enjoy the masterpieces created by the many resident spiders on the property. Shown here, most likely a web made by a spider from the family *Araneidae*, known as orbweavers.

# Q&A | THE CURIOSITY CORNER

By: Julia Vanatta, Wild Ones Twin Cities chapter

**Question:** I've started hearing about Asian jumping worms. We've always had earthworms; what makes these worms different? What should I be aware of?

**Answer:** Each spring, nature lovers flock to nearby woodlands to experience Minnesota's awe-inspiring annual profusion of ephemeral wildflowers. As one of those nature lovers, I hiked in Nerstrand Big Woods State Park in southeast Minnesota this past May to experience the wonderment of this

park's robust ecosystem of spring wildflowers. Nerstrand is a rare virgin woodland carpeted with spring ephemerals and is noted for hosting one of the only populations of the rare dwarf trout lily.

You may be shocked to learn that there is an invasive species so devastating that Nerstrand and other pristine woodlands are at risk. Minnesota, as well as other areas of the country, is experiencing an invasion of Asian jumping worms (*Amynta* spp.) which are easily spread by human and pet visitors, management crews, and off road vehicles.

## **Asian Jumping Worms Destroy the Top-Most Layer of Soil**

Asian jumping worms (AJW) voraciously devour organic matter and leaf litter, destroying the top layer of soil that supports vegetation. A heavy worm infestation leaves behind a thick layer of fine castings which makes

the forest soil surface prone to erosion. This causes tree roots to become exposed, and prohibits seeds from regenerating. When an AJW cocoon (egg sac) develops into a hatchling, the juvenile and adult worms will likely go unnoticed. In the favorable conditions of our gardens, a second generation of worms in year one will lead to a significant and unmanageable infestation in year two. While the worms themselves will die, the cocoons can survive our harsh winters. It could take only one person, tire tread, or unclean tool to introduce an AJW cocoon into a Scientific Natural Area, state park, local patch of woodland—or your own yard.

**"I never imagined an invasive species as horrific as these jumping worms."**

*Lee Frelich, Director of the Center for Forest Ecology, University of Minnesota.*



A juvenile AJW from the "critter terrarium" I use in my bare root clinics for hands-on demonstrations. Image: Julia Vanatta.

## A Relatively New and Relatively Unknown Invasive Species

Most people, including gardeners, have not yet heard of AJW. Those who are familiar with these worms often falsely believe there is nothing they can do to forestall their rapid spread. But, despite no currently known method to remove AJW once it has entered an area, there is much that should be known about this particularly destructive species. It is incumbent on each of us to become educated on early detection, containment, and prevention techniques. We also need to speak up by contacting the city and county agencies that manage our park lands. Surprisingly, many of those responsible for managing our park lands are under informed about the threat AJW poses to our local ecosystems.

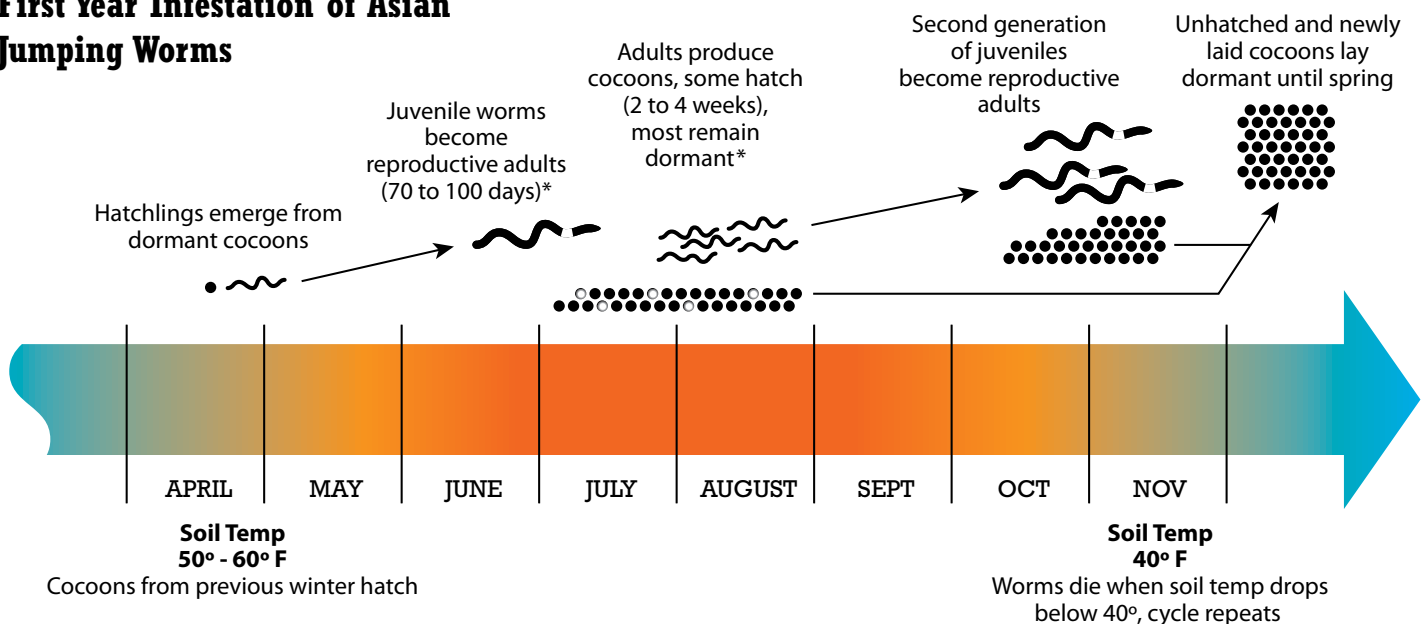


Erosion from an AJW infestation on tree roots in a Chicago public park, illustrating the threat AJW poses to woodlands.

## What You Should Know about Prevention and Early Detection

Plan ahead for the 2022 gardening season! Being able to identify the difference in appearance between European earthworms and AJW is an important first step. Become familiar with the general identification of European earthworms, including night crawlers, angleworms, and red wigglers—all of which are also not native to Minnesota. While these European earthworms each can negatively impact our wild areas, none has as an egregious ecosystem impact as AJW.

## First Year Infestation of Asian Jumping Worms



Many climate variables factor into lifecycle of *Amyntas agrestis* (Asian jumping worm), especially temperature and soil moisture. Current trends have stretched the growing season in Upper Midwest, especially in heat islands and managed gardens in urban areas. These favorable conditions increase the probability that a second generation of worms will reproduce.

\*Roughly half of juvenile worms will not survive to adulthood. Each adult worm produces 10 to 50 cocoons.



Top: Average garden soil.

Middle: Juvenile jumping worm castings from a managed garden.

Bottom: Adult jumping worm castings from a heavy infestation.

Note: each photo has a hydro fertilizer bead commonly found in time-release potting soil. These beads should not be confused with an AJW cocoon.

All images: Julia Vanatta.

As the ground thaws, the first full-size worms you see will be one of these more common earthworms. Note the appearance of common earthworms, what they feel like, how they move. Jumping worms, especially juveniles, look similar to European earthworms but act differently. Hands-on comparison is key to identification.

Knowing where to look for AJW is key to early detection. Hatchlings and juveniles will likely first appear near hardscaping that retains heat in the fall and warms up quickly in the spring (bottom right photo). Juveniles (May-June) and adult AJW often linger under logs, leaf litter, or mulched areas. In your garden, examine soil near any area where you introduced a new plant, compost, soil, or mulch.

Unfortunately, we cannot trust that purchased gardening products are contamination free. In 2021, several local nurseries and garden centers reported infestations.

**You personally exert the most control on your garden by paying close attention and adopting these best practices:**

- Be careful what you import, transfer, or export from your garden.
- Learn how to competently bare root any plants you receive or exchange with friends.
- Be mindful of cleaning tools, containers, and shoe or tire treads when you work or volunteer at a community garden or natural area.
- Reserve one pair of shoes to use exclusively in your own garden. Keep the soles of other shoes used for hiking or gardening elsewhere clean (as well as shoes used in your own garden).

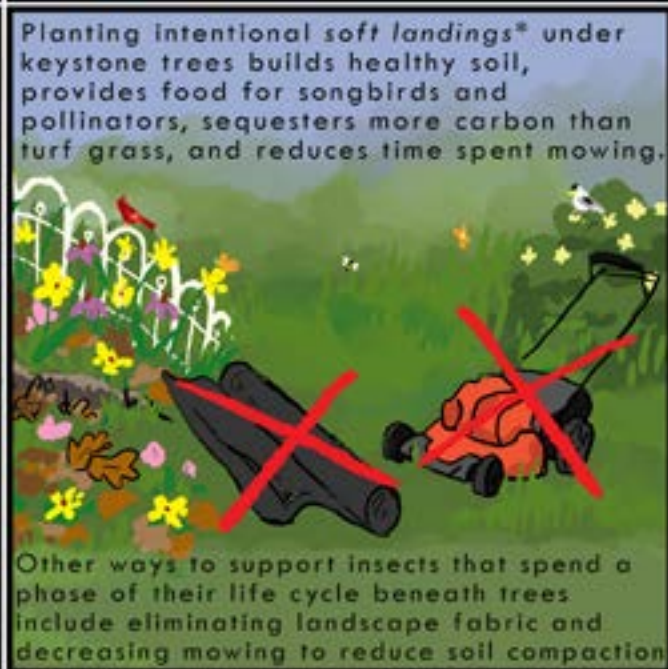
**Stay informed and get up-to-date information by visiting the DNR websites in [Wisconsin](#) or [Minnesota](#).**



**Have a Question?** Send it to the Wild Ones Twin Cities periodical editors [HERE! \[info@wildonestwincities.org\]](mailto:info@wildonestwincities.org)

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SOFT LANDINGS UNDER TREES

For existing trees in your yard or trees you plan to plant, consider how to make a larger environmental impact by creating soft landings under your trees. Soft landings are diverse native plantings under keystone trees (or any regionally appropriate native tree). These plantings provide critical shelter and habitat for one or more life cycle stages of moths, butterflies, beetles, and other beneficial insects. [Click for a good reference](#) for types of native plants to plant under trees as well as techniques for safe planting for tree health.



Funded by a grant from Wild Ones Minnesota (C)©2021 Heather Holm and Neighborhood Greening;

Developed in consultation with Desiree Narango, Ph.D., Artwork by Elsa Cousins

\*For more on creating soft landing plantings under trees, visit: [www.pollinatorsnativeplants.com/softlandings.html](http://www.pollinatorsnativeplants.com/softlandings.html)

# From the Designer's Desk

Andy Scott,  
ReWild Native Gardens, LLC

## Native Bird Habitat Garden for Open Space

Full Sun/Part Shade | Mesic | Average Soils

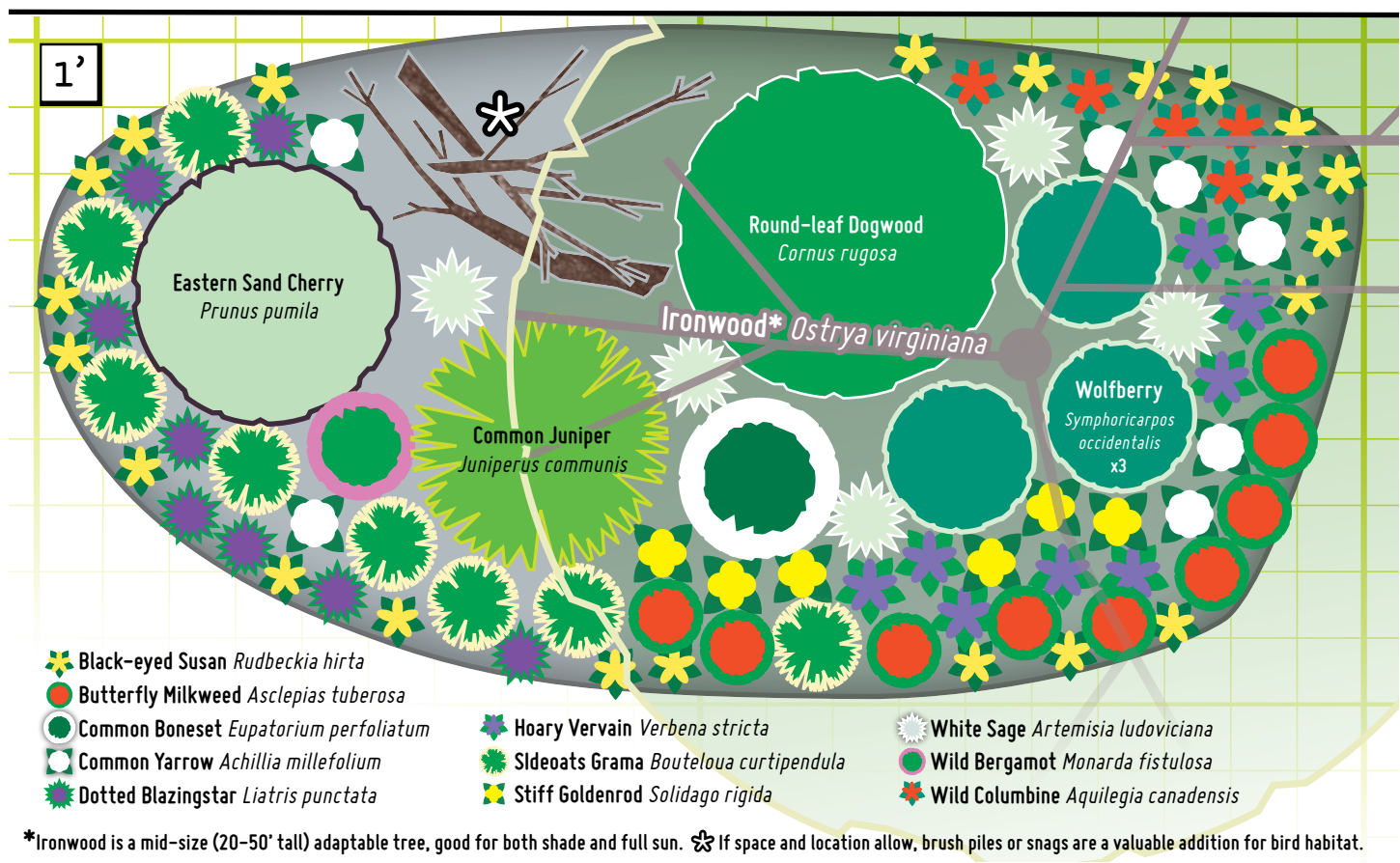
### Design Notes & Site Recommendations:

Adapt this plan to fit your site. This example shows a roughly 20'x 10' area (floating "pocket bed").

A good design for converting a full sun "blank canvas" lawn to garden. Remove sod using traditional methods or by utilizing solarization or smothering via the ["lasagna method"](#).

Design offers multiple levels of habitat to support a diversity of bird species year-round. Also offers foraging resources in the form of both berries and insect life (host plants) and nesting materials.

Fill in the gaps: Get away from dependence on mulch by filling planted gaps with native groundcovers. Common Yarrow (included in plant list) and Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) are great "green mulch" plants. Areas of bare soil have habitat value as well.



**About the Designer** Andy Scott founded his native garden landscape and design business in 2017. He has helped residents and commercial properties convert lawn and wasted space to wildlife-friendly gardens that support a myriad of organisms including beneficial insects and birds.

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# WEB of LEARNING

Online Resources to Link, Connect, and Expand Knowledge

## Agastache foeniculum uh-GAS-tuh-kee fuh-NICK-you-lum

Do you ever wonder how the Latin names of plants are pronounced? Here's a great audio resource from the [Missouri Botanical Garden](#). Click on the audio icon next to the Latin name for pronunciation.



## Sedges: A Beautiful Lawn Alternative

An older article by [Benjamin Vogt](#) that is just as relevant today as it was in 2015.

Shown: Pennsylvania sedge and wild strawberry.

## Minnesota Wildflowers: A Field Guide to the Flora of Minnesota

If you have not met this smart website yet, it's time you made its acquaintance. *Everything* you need to know about Minnesota Native Plants.



*Bombus griseocollis*  
brown-belted bumble bee

2nd abdominal band with yellow in middle bordered by rusty brown in a swooping shape. Top of head black.

## A Guide to Bumblebees of Minnesota

How many different species of flying teddy bear (aka, bumblebee) can you identify in your native plant garden? Identifying insects in our gardens is a great way to connect and engage with the habitats we create. If you can find more than six species, let's talk. You're doing a great job building habitat. Remember: the male and female of the same species often do not look alike.

## WHAT WE'RE READING, WATCHING & HEARING

### What We're Reading...

[A Sting in the Tale,](#)  
[My Adventures with Bumblebees](#)

by Dave Goulson

A delightful book of storytelling and learning. "One of the UK's most respected conservationists and the founder of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Goulson combines tales of a child's growing passion for nature with a deep insight into the crucial importance of the bumblebee."



### What We're Watching...

[Ask Doug](#). By Doug Tallamy

Famed entomologist Douglas Tallamy gets asked a lot of questions. Here's a wonderful series of short videos on the website *Homegrown National Park*, in which he answers the questions he hears most frequently. Be sure to watch the one on mosquitoes and spread the word.



### What We're Hearing...

*In Defense of Plants* podcast:  
[Urban Lichens](#).

Lichens: neither plant nor animal. Hiding in plain sight. An amazing symbiosis of fungus and alga. Used worldwide for air quality monitoring. Wildlife food. On trees, they're harmless. Start seeing lichen (if you can see them, they're already 20-30 years old). You will never be able to unsee them again.



## WILD ONES—In the Field

### Chapter/Membership Information



The Island Lake Elementary School pollinator garden has evolved into a spectacular native plant garden that showcases a lovely variety of grasses and forbs. Image: Karen Eckman

### Island Lake Elementary School Pollinator Garden

*Karen Eckman, Big River Big Woods chapter*

**In September 2016**, Wild One's Big River Big Woods chapter adopted the Island Lake Elementary School pollinator garden as their Shoreview service project. The 36' x 36' native plant garden is nestled into a corner of the school's playground where students at recess and after school visitors can observe the garden and its pollinator visitors up close.

In the years since the overgrown 2012 Eagle Scout project was resurrected from an oblivion of thistle, buckthorn, quackgrass and other invasive plants, Big River Big Woods volunteers have invested about 600 hours to restore and maintain it. The native plant garden has 36 species of wildflowers and five species of grasses. Regent serviceberry and dwarf bush honeysuckle are also planted in the garden. Regent serviceberry, a cultivar, was chosen because of its limited height for the corners of the garden.

The school garden was recently awarded a [LEAP](#) (Landscape Ecology Awards Program) Award by the Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed District.

### Want To Volunteer?

Check out chapter websites to sign up for volunteer opportunities around the state. Thank you.



#### Wild Ones Reflections

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#### A special thank you to this issue's contributors:

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Karen Eckman  
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Julia Vanatta  
Andy Scott



Image: Karen Eckman

**LEARN MORE** and **JOIN** the movement at [wildones.org](http://wildones.org)

**ALL MONTHLY TOPIC MEETINGS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!\***

**\*All events are subject to change or cancellation due to COVID-19. Many chapters' meetings/presentations are virtual this winter and spring. See individual chapter websites for further information.**



## **WILD ONES MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS**

**WHO WE ARE...** Wild Ones is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to provide learning and field experiences to those interested in Minnesota native plant landscaping and environmental education.

### **WHY JOIN?**

**LEARN** more about native plant landscaping and related topics during our monthly programs from experts in the field. Minnesota Wild Ones Chapters also sponsor an annual Design with Nature conference in February.

**SUPPORT** our mission by purchasing local native wildflowers, grasses and shrubs during our annual spring native plant sale.

**TOUR** local homeowners' native plant gardens and yards during the summer months.

**VOLUNTEER** at Wild Ones sponsored community activities, such as the Minneapolis Monarch Festival and native plant habitat gardening at Nokomis Naturescape in Minneapolis.

**SHARE** and connect through regular email and quarterly newsletters or get up-to-date program information on our website.

**ENJOY** getting to know people who share your interest!

[\\$40 tax-deductible annual membership includes the national organization and local chapter.](#)

**Wild Ones Reflections** is published periodically by the Twin Cities Wild Ones chapter with contributions from Wild Ones chapters throughout the state.