

# NATIVE NEWS

## Gibson Woods Wild Ones

6201 Parish Ave. Hammond, IN \* 219-844-3188

December 2021

Volume 22, Issue 10

Wild Ones promotes environmentally sound landscaping practices to encourage biodiversity through the preservation, restoration, and establishment of native plant communities. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit, environmental, educational, and advocacy organization.

### GREETING FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Hello Wild Ones Friends!

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving! Now, just like that, the Holiday Season is upon us.

We've got some fun things planned this month & next.

I hope you can join us at our December Open House at Gibson Woods. Details about that event are listed below.

For Members, our December business meeting will be via Zoom on Saturday, December 11th (please make sure to register). And then in January, we will be conducting our Annual Greenhouse Orientation. If you are interested in working in the Greenhouse this season, please make sure to RSVP for one of the dates. This applies to all of us—even those who have attended in the past. We will go over procedures and will start our volunteer schedule. There's always something new to learn.

If you're looking for a way to help pass the cold months away, and want to get started on your own garden, Winter Sowing is a great project for you! Please consider joining our Zoom presentation on Monday, January 10th to learn how.

In case I don't see you before - I hope you and yours enjoy a Joyous Holiday Season!

Kim Moor



Visit us online at:

<http://gw-wildones.org/>

### New Membership & Renewals:

\$40 household - or - \$25 student, ltd income

### Send check to:

Wild Ones, 2285 Butte des Morts Beach Rd., Neenah, WI 54956

Mark your check 'Chapter 38'

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monthly Meetings are typically held the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at Gibson Woods unless otherwise noted.

Links to register for all online presentations & meeting will be provided prior to the meeting.

Please email [kckim10@gmail.com](mailto:kckim10@gmail.com) or text/call 219-433-5731 with questions.

#### December 4, 2021

Open House at Gibson Woods  
(R.S.V.P. required)

#### December 11, 2021

Business Meeting  
(via Zoom - Registration required)

#### January 8 & 9, 2022

Greenhouse Orientation - in person  
See page 2 for times & more details  
(R.S.V.P. required)

#### Special Presentation:

January 10, 2022 6:30-8:00 p.m.  
Winter Sowing with Dolly Foster  
(via Zoom - Registration required)

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### DECEMBER OPEN HOUSE - GIBSON WOODS

Saturday, December 4th 10 am-12 pm

masks & social distancing are required

**Book Sale** - We have many educational books available - as well as t-shirts & even some jewelry. Come out on December 4th to do some Holiday shopping for the nature lovers on your list. Or, pick up a book or two for yourself to help get you through the long winter! Most of our books are discounted, and Wild Ones members can take advantage of a discount off the discounted price!

**Ornaments using natural materials** - We invite you to collect & share items from nature that you've found. We will provide paper bags so you can take a little of this & that to create your own natural ornament at home. A limited amount of people will be able to make ornaments at the open house.

**Native Seed Swap** - Bring some of your native plant seeds to swap with others at our December meeting. Please label what you have. You don't need to clean & package what you have (unless you want to). We will supply bags & markers so we can all share! Winter sowing is a great way to get started on a new garden project!

**You don't need to be a member to attend this event. But we do require an RSVP. We will assign appointment times if we reach the maximum allowed inside at one time.**

Please send RSVP to [kckim10@gmail.com](mailto:kckim10@gmail.com) or call/text 219-433-5731.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS****Join us on Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Wild-Ones-Native-Plants-Natural-Landscapes-Gibson-Woods-Chapter-38/528949993858676>

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**GIBSON WOODS CHAPTER BUSINESS MEETING– DEC 11 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

**YOU MUST BE A MEMBER**, and must register in advance for this meeting:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0pdOCupjwsEtN9pch9iUPkB96KrdxK-0V>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing a link to join the meeting.

We will be electing our 2022 Officers at this meeting.

**JANUARY 2022 GREENHOUSE ORIENTATION  
masks & social distancing are required**

Our January Orientation will look a little different this year...

We will conduct a few mini-orientations so that we can keep attendance low. Please choose from the dates listed below and send your RSVP to Peggy Foster at [omanigetwithit@comcast.net](mailto:omanigetwithit@comcast.net), or call her at 219-286-3262. If your chosen date or time is filled up, she will work with you to figure out an alternate date.

We will go over greenhouse procedures at this orientation & work on sign-ups for workdays. All members who are interested in working in the Greenhouse this season are encouraged to attend an orientation. If you absolutely cannot attend one of these, please let Peggy know so we can set up an alternate date for you.

Saturday, January 8th - 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.  
Saturday, January 8th - 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Sunday, January 9th - 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

In order to work in our Greenhouse, you must be a member. If you are interested in joining Wild Ones, you can go to [wildones.org](http://wildones.org) to sign up online, or contact Karl Ackermann at [acks123@sbcglobal.net](mailto:acks123@sbcglobal.net) or call him at 708-790-1322.

During a long dreary winter, it is very refreshing working in our heated Greenhouse. It smells like Spring, and when the sun is shining it feels like it too!!

**WINTER SOWING WORKSHOP - with Dolly Foster  
When: Jan 10, 2022 6:30-8:00 PM Central Time**

Join us for a virtual Winter Sowing workshop on Zoom. Learn a great method for starting hundreds of native seedlings in a tiny space. Winter Sowing is a great alternative to growing them inside your home and is best for native seeds that benefit from a cold period (cold stratification). This method takes advantage of the natural temperatures and day length to naturally stimulate germination.

Seed collection will also be covered in this workshop. Start collecting 1-gallon jugs and potting soil now. A good well-draining, soilless mix that does not contain water-holding polymers or fertilizer is best and is challenging to find in January and February.

Open to the Public. Attendance is limited to the first 100 attendees who show up. But, the meeting will be recorded and will be available to [all who register](#).

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIk-d-qvqjwoHdQikHXVrVeIBiotu303LirE>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**PLANT STUDY** - by Olimpia Gutierrez

**Witch-hazel** (*Hamamelis virginiana*) - also known as: Winterbloom

Witch-hazel family - *Hamameliaceae*

*Hamamelis virginiana*, known as the American witch-hazel, is a deciduous flowering shrub with a wide range across North America. It can grow as a small tree but it tends to form a cluster of stems at the base, with smooth, light-brown bark, that grow up to 6 meters tall. The alternate leaves are elliptical with wavy-toothed margins and are dark green in the spring, turning brilliant yellow in the fall.



Witch-hazels flower from October to December producing clusters of yellow, fragrant flowers with ribbon-shaped petals that often persist even after all the leaves have fallen. The fruit is an elongated woody capsule measuring 10-14mm which splits at maturity a year after pollination launching its black seeds up to 20 feet. A woody branching taproot serves as the root system.



**Cultivation:** Grows in woodlands, forest margins, and stream banks. Witch-hazels are great for use in the understory or for a shrub border. An extract can be made from the bark and leaves of the plant which acts as an astringent. Native Americans used it to treat swellings, inflammation, and tumors.

**Soil type:** Acidic, loamy, sandy, well drained soil

**Moisture:** Tolerates a variety of moisture conditions

**Sun:** Full sun to partial shade

**Height:** 15-30 ft, with a spread of 15-25 ft at maturity

**Zones:** 3-8

**Propagation:** Seed, layering

**Disease and insect pressure:** None of note.

**Fauna:** Witch hazel provides cover and nesting habitat for birds; birds also eat the seeds. Deer browse on the foliage and twigs during the winter when other food sources are scarce.

#### Sources:

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamamelis\\_virginiana#Uses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamamelis_virginiana#Uses)
- <https://www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/TreeDetail.cfm?ItemID=940>
- [https://www.wildflower.org/gallery/result.php?id\\_image=32323](https://www.wildflower.org/gallery/result.php?id_image=32323)
- <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=281023&isprofile=1&basic=Hamamelis%20virginiana>



Blooming in the Fall, flowers are an unusual yellow, and spidery-looking



The fruit are green, slightly-fuzzy, acorn-looking objects. They're dividing into two parts, each containing a black seed that is explosively ejected as far as 3-7 meters away from the tree.

## BOOK REVIEWS

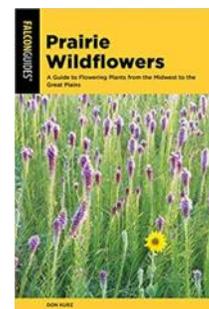
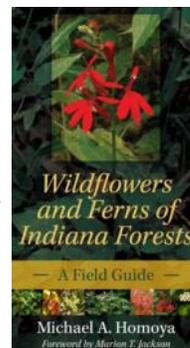
Listed below are some books that we will have at our December Open House.

At one of our Fall meetings, someone asked me to share the books that are good for native flower identification.

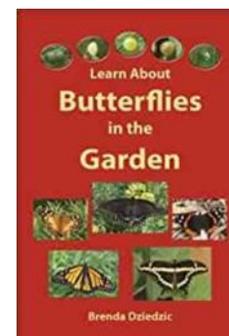
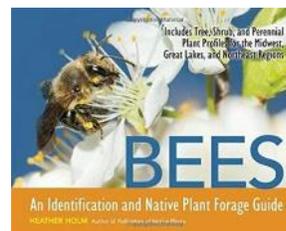
“Wildflowers and Ferns of Indiana Forests” and “Prairie Wildflowers” are great books filled with many color photos. Both detail habitat requirements, plant sizes, and describe historical uses. The former is great for learning about the plant associations that are normally found in nature, which can be useful for restoring your land or replicating natural habitats. The latter contains prairie wildflowers from all over the country, and contains many of the plants you can see in our State.

Additionally, “Bees” and “Butterflies in the Garden” are great books for both insect identification and native plant associations. The former is categorized by plant type such as tree size, shrubs, and flowering plants. It contains details pertaining to flowering time and duration, fruit consumption by birds, and the types of bees they attract. The latter is great for butterfly identification and plant associations. Both have many color photos and tons of useful information.

If you prefer to do online research, then you may want to check out Illinois Wildflowers: [www.illinoiswildflowers.info](http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info). It is, by far, my favorite site to learn about native plants. Plants are categorized into Woodland, Wetland, Prairie, Trees/Shrubs, Grasses, and others. Details abound describing plant sizes and identification, growth habits, and associated insects. There are also several databases where you can search for plant-eating insects, flower visiting insects, and vertebrate and plants associations.



We don't have this one in stock, but it's available on Amazon. We will attempt to carry it soon.

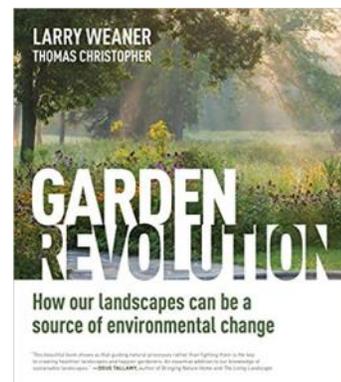


Jake Cseke, Community Projects Chair

### Garden Revolution - How Our Landscapes Can Be a Source of Environmental Change

“Shows us that guiding natural processes rather than fighting them is the key to creating healthier landscapes and happier gardeners.” —Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*

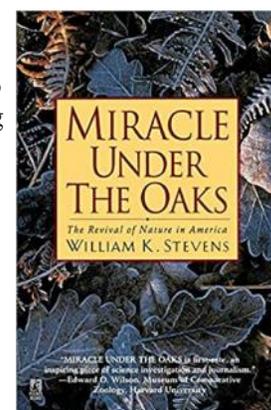
Larry Weaner is an icon in the world of ecological landscape design, and now his revolutionary approach is available to home gardeners. *Garden Revolution* shows how an ecological approach to planting can lead to beautiful gardens that buck much of conventional gardening's counter-productive, time-consuming practices. Instead of picking the wrong plant and then weeding, irrigating, and fertilizing, Weaner advocates for choosing plants that are adapted to the soil and climate of a specific site and letting them naturally evolve over time. This lushly-photographed reference is for anyone looking for a better, smarter way to garden.



### Miracle Under the Oaks

Once a thriving habitat, Vestal Grove, a tract of land along the Chicago River, was abandoned and on the edge of oblivion. But Steve Packard, a charismatic, modern-day Thoreau, was determined to bring it back. With a small troop of volunteers, he began clearing the land only to make an amazing discovery: Vestal Grove was a long-lost ecosystem. Neither prairie nor forest, it was a living community so finely tuned that only certain flora and fauna could live in its unique dapple of sun and shade. The challenge was to unearth its ecological Rosetta stone and find the secrets of its survival. Little did Packard and the others know just how wondrous those secrets would be.

A page-turning mystery, inspirational drama, and uplifting testament to a new breed of American pioneer, *Miracle Under the Oaks* is an important book for everyone—environmentalists, lovers of nature, dedicated gardeners, and the new generation that will inherit the earth.



## Use Native Plants in Your Holiday Decorations

### How to Find Greenery

Start in your own garden. You won't find fresher greenery at a better price than the trees, bushes and vines outside your front or back door. And, if you are an avid gardener, the selection of unusual plants will likely be far better than what you can find from a commercial vendor.

There are some things to consider when cutting your own garland and trimmings:

- Not all holiday greenery is truly "green." The spikey foliage of Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), for example, may have a grey or blue cast with a slight bronzing of the tips in winter
- When removing limbs and stems, you are pruning the plants. Give careful consideration to what you cut and what you leave. The goal is to trim the plant in a manner that helps it keep its natural form.



### Types of Greenery to Use in Holiday Decor

Many different kinds of greenery can be used for holiday decorations. Pines, firs, and cedars work well indoors because they dry out slowly and hold their needles best at warm interior temperatures. They may last for several weeks if properly treated and cared for. Spraying holiday greenery with an anti-transpirant, for example, will help preserve it. Anti-transpirants reduce the amount of transpiration, or water loss from plant leaves, and are available from garden centers, hardware stores and can sometimes be found at Christmas tree lots. Hemlock, spruces, and most broadleaf evergreens will last longer if used outdoors.

### Berries and Nuts to Decorate With

Some plants that aren't evergreens make excellent accents to holiday arrangements. Consider red twig dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) and yellow twig dogwood (*Cornus sericea* 'Flaviramea'), whose stems are brilliant red and bright yellow. They are extremely effective as strong vertical elements.

When the deciduous shrub winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*) loses its leaves in the fall, it exposes stems that are covered in bright red berries that put on a seasonal display that can't be beaten.

Sprays of berries, dried flowers, cones, and seed pods add color and contrasting texture to holiday decorations. How you use these is limited only by your imagination and creativity. The possibilities include: acorns, native bittersweet, winterberry, pecans, pine cones, sweet gum balls, black walnuts, cool seed-heads, etc.

### Keeping Greenery Safe and Fresh

Here are some tips for keeping greenery from becoming a fire hazard and looking as fresh as possible as long as possible.

- Fill a bucket with water before starting. Put the freshly cut ends into the water and store them out of direct sunlight in a cool dry place such as an unheated garage until you are ready to use them. Crush the ends of woody stems. This will allow the cut end to take in more water. Soak the greenery overnight by immersing it in water. This allows the cuttings to absorb the maximum amount of moisture.
- Allow the foliage to dry and then spray it with an anti-transpirant. Do not use anti-transpirants on juniper berries, cedar, or blue spruce because they can damage the wax coating that gives these plants their distinctive color.
- Store finished wreaths, garlands, and arrangements in a cool location until you are ready to place them in your home.
- Do not place fresh greenery and fruits near doors or windows that get direct sunlight or close to candles or near heat vents.

### Plant Toxicity

When using natural decorations, bear in mind that some popular berry-producing plants can present poisoning hazards for small children and pets. For more information about the safety of specific plants for your pets, consult the ASPCA's [searchable database](#).

### Plan Ahead

In the spring when your garden comes back to life and you visit nurseries shopping for plants, think about those that have colors, textures, and berries that would add charm and appeal to your Christmas decorations. What could be better than a garden with year-round appeal?

Source: <https://www.treehugger.com/how-to-use-native-plants-in-your-holiday-decorations-4863156>

## PLEASE READ: A MESSAGE FROM THE PORTER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS

Because of the uncertainty around the Covid-19 pandemic and its highly-transmissible Delta variants, we are sorry to say that the annual Gardening Show will be postponed until January, 2023.

After examining many options including physical distancing in the seminar and vendor areas, Seed & Bulb Exchange and the Garden Cafe, the Steering Committee determined it's impossible to downsize our popular, nearly 3000-person gathering of gardeners. Added to that, speakers are reluctant to appear in person. And, as you can imagine from attending past Shows, capturing the spirit and enthusiasm of the day in a virtual, online event just wouldn't work.

Therefore, to preserve the integrity of the Annual Gardening Show and to bring you the quality experience you've come to expect from Porter County Master Gardeners Association events, we have postponed our 17th Show. So save this date, January 21, 2023, when we hope to bring you a Show that matches your expectations for the joyful celebration of gardening you remember and have come to expect.

In the meantime, we wish you good health, encourage you to stay well and, most of all, to anticipate the return of the Show. Your loyalty and dedication to making our Gardening Show a success is truly inspiring and gives us confidence as we plan for our best Show ever in 2023.

## NATIONAL WILD ONES WEBINARS

### Register for 'Native Plants, Phytoremediation & Green Infrastructure' Webinar

Wild Ones Presents 'Native Plants, Phytoremediation & Green Infrastructure: How Native Plants Can Be Used to Improve Environmental Quality' with Eric Fuselier

Register now for this FREE informative webinar on Thursday, December 9th at 6 p.m. CT.

Discover how native plants and phytoremediation can be used to improve soil, air and water quality by removing or transforming common environmental contaminants found in urban, suburban and rural settings. Learn how to pay attention to surrounding land uses and activities to know how to select species for your next native plant project that will benefit the environment beyond providing habitat for pollinators and wildlife.

This webinar will be recorded and available to the public on the Wild Ones YouTube channel shortly after the event.

Speaker Eric Fuselier is an Environmental Scientist based in Arkansas, founder of the Wild Ones Ozark Chapter and serves as a Wild Ones National Board Member.

Register here:

<https://wildones.org/phytoremediation-with-eric-fuselier/>

### Recording for the Honorary Directors Webinar With Heather Holm now available online!

**Holm discussed her recently published book WASPS: Their Biology, Diversity, and Role as Beneficial Insects and Pollinators of Native Plants.**

WASPS features approximately 150 species of flower-visiting wasps that occur in eastern North America, and the specific native plants and habitat each species depends upon.

This webinar was recorded on Wednesday, October 20th and is now available to the public on the Wild Ones YouTube channel.

Holm is a Wild Ones Honorary Director, biologist, pollinator conservationist and award-winning author.

**Follow this link:**

<https://wildones.org/wild-ones-presents-wasps-2021/>

### Recording for the Honorary Directors Webinar With Dr. Doug Tallamy now available online!

**Dr. Tallamy shared from his latest book The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees!**

Dr. Tallamy inspired over 1,500 webinar attendees to treasure these trees and to act to nurture and protect them.

This webinar has been recorded and is available to the public on the Wild Ones YouTube channel.

Dr. Tallamy is a Wild Ones Lifetime Honorary Director and Professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has taught insect-related courses for 40 years.

**Follow this link:** <https://wildones.org/the-nature-of-oaks-2021/>