

October 2022



OKTOBERFEST

Oktoberfest 2022 is in the books! It was another great year thanks to so many members of this community. From the tent, hayrides, beer, wine, cider, baked goods, sponsorship, set up and clean up crews, kids games, crafts, face painting and costume parade. None of this would be possible without everyone who stepped up to make this day amazing for their neighbors. Oktoberfest relies heavily on volunteerism and every year this neighborhood pulls together. THANK YOU!



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ECO-CORNER #24

by Jenn Cameron

Are good looks enough? (... asking for a friend ...)

What do you value in a relationship? This article is referring to your relationship with the plant world, of course! And, the friend mentioned in the title is our Earth. Let's carry on with imaginary snippets of potential Plantae relationship attractors:

"Ooooo, they're so tall! And good-looking, too!"
"Whatta beauty! Just look at those blooms!"

We're talking about plants here - flowers, grasses, shrubs, bushes, and trees. ;-) Many stores and nurseries are now posting end-of-season sales on plants. Before you take that show-stopping specimen home, take a minute to research the origin of the plant and understand the information on the tag, because in a healthy and balanced native ecosystem, LOOKS AREN'T EVERYTHING. Just like in the people world, sorry, but they're not. Many times there are plain looking yet finely co-evolved inter-relationships that have developed over a very long period of time between native plants and animals. Cultivars - specifically bred varietal and showy plant species - can be enticing to buy, but sometimes their characteristic differences compared to native plants can undermine wildlife survival and cause ecological hindrance over time.

Many wow-factor plants can be a serious distraction for pollinators. It's like junk food for nature - yuck. Pollinators, birds, and other wildlife could spend their short lives and limited energy gathering food (pollen, nectar, berries) from plants that might look or taste similar to native sources but truly don't provide the necessary full spectrum nutrition to meet their needs the way nature intended. And what's the point of a 'sterile' cultivar? I mean, from a wildlife food-source perspective, why bother? Ugh.

Another risk that comes when installing a non-native plant or potentially invasive species is when it "escapes" and spreads. Cultivars can become problematic if they overtake an eco-sensitive area and choke out native plants that have co-evolved to support wildlife over millennia. Wildlife

consequently loses the habitats, food, or shelter they specifically depend upon for survival, and, well, there goes the habitat/neighborhood. Soil and water quality can also be negatively impacted (buckthorn and purple loosestrife are examples).



Consumers bedazzled by a cultivar they purchase and install in their yards can unintentionally cause real, ecology-busting consequences far beyond property lines. When cultivars are routinely selected over native plants that have most perfectly evolved to sustain wildlife in an area, the overall quality and stability of a natural, native environment can be diminished to a degree. Before you bring that WOW! plant home to install in your yard, it helps to think beyond good looks before you make your purchase. Exceptional or exaggerated botanical features that enhance the looks or performance of anything in the Kingdom Plantae may not support the balance of the overall natural environment in a beneficial way. Before I'm tempted to spend \$ at a plant sale, I now stop, research a minute with my smart phone, and think to myself: "It looks good in my eyes ... but is it really good for the environment?"

P.S. Yes, I have cultivars in my yard (kind gifts, prior owner plantings, "volunteers," unwise or less-informed purchasing and planting decisions on my part, etc.). However, as I continue to learn more about natives, they are my focus when buying any new plants ... IF I have the room for them! :-)

<https://piedmontmastergardeners.org/article/native-species-or-cultivars-of-native-plants-does-it-matter/>

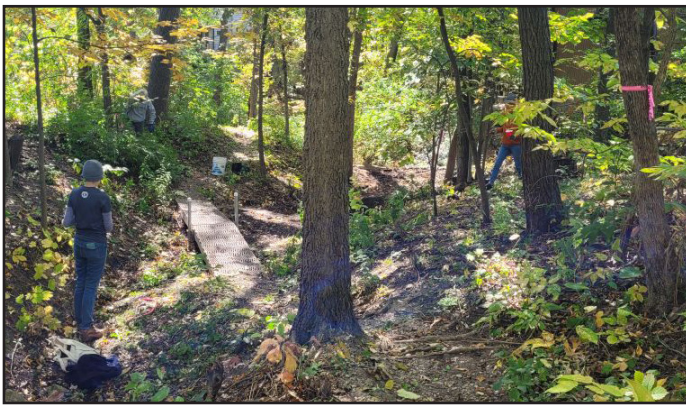
<https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/garden-scoop/2019-12-28-native-vs-nativar-do-cultivars-native-plants-have-same-benefits>

<https://openlands.org/get-involved/lands-in-harmony/four-projects-to-improve-your-land/add-attractive-natives/>

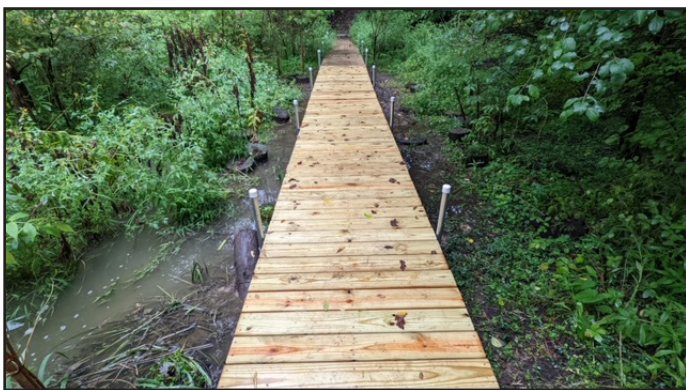
Parks & Easements

Thank you for all the hard work on our cleanup day and after!

Our group this fall was small, but mighty. Over the past several weeks we've had so many volunteers show up to help clean up our easements and parks. Every week a little more brush gets removed in our woodlands and more neighbors learn how to identify invasive species. It has been great sharing the importance of this work while getting to know our neighbors better. For those who could not attend our fall cleanup day or additional work days since, here is an overview of what we have done:

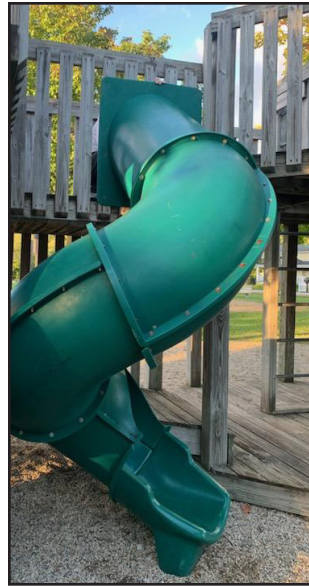


Ravinia, Hiawatha terrace and Oak terrace: We removed invasive bushes and excessive brush, repaired bridges and steps, and seeded for grass in Oak Terrace.



Maple Park: General clean up and the walking paths were widened.

The Beach: Trees and bushes were trimmed, the rock wall and garden beds were weeded, the grass was overseeded and benches were painted and repaired. The beach shed was also cleaned out and organized.



Schwerman Park: Grass was over-seeded, a small unhealthy tree was removed, the old burning bushes at the park entrance were removed and small repairs were done at the playground including repairing everyone's favorite, the merry-go-round. And while it was not done on cleanup day, we really need to give a shout-out to Kim DelBene, Scott Hansen and Ryan Haukedahl for adding

that tube slide, in the dark. It was a great Facebook Marketplace find and we're lucky to have a neighbor that was able to pick it up the same day so we didn't lose out on an amazing deal.

Wildflower and Juneau Terrace: We did tons of weeding and buckthorn removal.

The Shed: Thanks to all the people who helped clean out the shed; Sarah Owen, Tammie Trahan, Gary Love, Sam Kendall, Nancy Brashear, Judy O'Brien, Sherri Poorman, and Jake Love.



What else is new in our parks and easements

At the Schwerman Park Playground:

The renovations have started slowly. The merry-go-round has been repaired and re-installed. A tube slide has been added per the kids request and has been a big hit. The goal is to slowly rebuild the park over the next year. The hope is that it can stay operational for the kids, especially if the lake gets lowered in

Parks & Easements continued on next page

Parks & Easements continued

the Spring. The park will be re-built with the help of volunteers.



We will reach out in the Spring once we are ready to fully start the repairs.

In Ravinia:

Earlier this fall, I met with our new stewardship contractor in Ravinia and Hiawatha Terrace. He helped me identify and tag both areas so our amazing volunteers can do the hard, yet surprisingly fun, work of removing the excessive and mostly invasive brush. We are slowly removing what we can based on volunteer availability. This is work that simply would not happen without volunteers. All the areas that have been cleared will be seeded and with the additional light it created, new flowers, sedges and other native plants can now grow to serve as food, habitat and erosion control. In addition to all the brush removal, an existing bridge was extended and paths were widened. The lake and Oak Terrace are now much more easily accessible from Hiawatha Terrace and West Sylvan Drive South.

What else to expect this fall

We will continue the brush removal in Ravinia, Hiawatha Terrace and Briar Terrace. Additional trees will be planted in Schwerman and Comfort Park. If you are interested in volunteering to help, please email Sarah Owen at Sarahstoeckel@gmail.com

This fall, remember to leave the leaves

Our yards and gardens provide an essential overwintering habitat and food for many invertebrates, frogs, toads, turtles, songbirds and mammals. Frogs, toads and turtles need leaves for shelter and food. Many species of moth and butterfly caterpillars overwinter in leaves and then emerge the next spring. Mammals rely on leaves and yard waste for nesting materials. And songbirds rely on fallen leaves to provide food for their young come spring.

Instead of burning or raking your leaves consider leaving them to break down naturally to improve the soil while also adding food, shelter and nesting material for wildlife. If you must remove leaves from your lawn, consider mowing over to mulch them which adds an organic layer and improves the health of your grass. Or mulch them and add them to your garden beds or compost bin, they are an invaluable resource for any garden.



In addition to leaving your leaves, wait until spring to cut back your perennials and bushes. Besides adding winter interest, dried seed heads and berries are an important food source for many song birds. Leaving them also provides an extra layer of insulation and can help protect your plants from winter injury. Remove diseased foliage and stems, but leave the rest!

Last, but not least

Please remember to never dispose of your leaves or yard waste in our parks, easements and along W Sylvan. This includes leaf blowing. Also, burning in easements is only to be done with prior permission and for easement cleanup only, not property yard waste.

Sarah Owen
Kim Del Bene

Garden Club

I'd like to thank the Garden Club Board for all the wonderful activities that are planned throughout the year and the volunteers that make goodies for the bake sales. There are two of our members who are passing the torch this year. Patsy Sweeney has been doing the Oktoberfest Bake Sale for at least 20 years, recruited by Rita Rak. Peggy Delacruz has been on the board for 8 years doing Kids Games, Parade and Secretary.

Thank you for your participation in making Sylvan Lake a magical place to live.

Tammie Trahan

Garden Club Board 2022

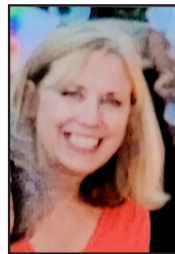
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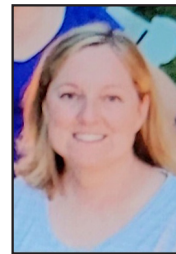
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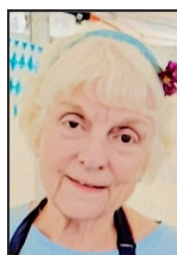


Olga Zavialov

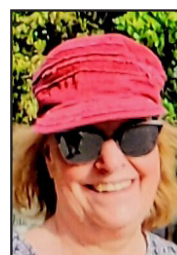
Assistant Board Directors



Wendy Kelberg



Patsy Sweeney



Nancy Brashear

Lake-to-Prairie Wild Ones Annual Conference

Wild Ones is a national organization that promotes the use of native plants in landscapes for many reasons including erosion control and protecting water quality. As residents of a lake community, we are all concerned about keeping our lake as healthy as possible.



The Lake-to-Prairie Wild Ones annual conference will take place on Saturday, November 12 at Round Lake Beach Cultural and Civic Center from 8:15-12:30. The 2022 conference entitled, The Foundation for Healthy Ecosystems: Healthy Living Soil will feature researchers from Morton Arboretum. In addition to the scheduled speakers, there will be resources and vendors to expand understanding and offer strategies for using native plants in attractive and functional ways.

For details and to register: laketoprairie.wildones.org
Questions: sanran@aol.com



Sylvan Lake Website www.slia.net

The Sylvan Lake website provides up-to-date information on events and activity around the lake. You can also download the latest Shoreline, participate on a message board, and learn about the history of Sylvan Lake.

The updated website is ready for your use. The only place that requires a password is the Sylvan Lake Phone Directory under the **Association, Contacts** tab.

If you don't have the password, send an email message to Sylvanlakers@gmail.com and request it.

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