



## SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

Here are some **highlights** from our **September 9, 2021, chapter meeting**:

- Chapter Business:
  - Chapter membership has increased by 6 since last month and now stands at 67.
  - Recordings of past meetings are available on our youtube channel. Search for Wild Ones of Southeastern Pennsylvania.
  - No Treasurer's report was presented.
- Thought of the Month: This month we're thinking about seeds. Take time to notice the seeds in your yard and appreciate nature's bounty and beauty. Many plants are looking ahead to next year and preparing to set seeds. Fern fronds are laden with spores, milkweed pods are ready to burst, sunflower seeds are ripening, squirrels are looking forward to nuts and acorns, and dogwood berries are turning red. Elderberries can be harvested for their medicinal properties. Hazelnuts can be roasted with beets for a delicious fall dish:

<https://daysunited.com/cooking/rosh-hashanah-2021/roasted-beets-with-hazelnuts>

Now is also the time to collect seeds that you might like to store and share.

<https://nanps.org/seed-collecting/> and <https://backyardhabitats.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Collecting-Your-Own-Wildflower-Seeds.pdf> Our December meeting will focus on winter seed sowing. Wildflower seeds can be sown anywhere there is exposed soil. Watch this great video of plant crusaders spreading native wildflower seeds in urban environments. <https://fb.watch/7EV-owr0Z/> Fall is also a great time for planting trees and perennials because the soil is still warm, but the air is cool and rain is more plentiful.

- Nominations for 2022 Officers and Committees: Chapter members are invited to help create a slate of officers for 2022. Our Treasurer will be stepping down, so a new Treasurer will be needed. Elections will be held at the November chapter meeting. Job descriptions are posted on our website. Several committee positions are open for the first time, since we are a new chapter – for example, Program Chair, Community Projects Chair, and Publicity Chair. If you are interested in a position, please contact Susan at [secretarywildonessepa@gmail.com](mailto:secretarywildonessepa@gmail.com) to put your name or another member's name forward for an officer or committee chair position.
- Report – Chapter Project. Our chapter's first community project, at Hillsdale Elementary School in West Chester, started last month. Volunteers assisted the school's gardening club and PTO to clear invasives from two overgrown planting beds in front of the school. The chapter bought

several flats of native plants to replant the raised bed in front of the school. The plants will be installed next week.

- Chapter Tabling Events. We had a table at a Ludwig's Corner event last weekend. This weekend (September 10-12), our chapter will have a table at the Philadelphia Honey Festival, and next Saturday our chapter will be at the Phoenixville Green Earth Festival.
- Presentation – The Perfect Plants for Soggy Soils:

Presented by Matthew Ross, Continuing Education Director at Longwood Gardens.

- Mangroves are classic waters-edge plants, providing habitat for birds, amphibians, and insects, extending the land into water.
- Why should we use waters-edge plants? Recent flooding reminds us that these plants help mitigate flooding challenges, whether the affected areas are large or small. Marginal plants provide environmental services, habitat, and beauty.
- Benefits of using marginal plants – they survive in harsh conditions, tolerate brackish water, survive in anerobic environments, provide habitat and shelter for wildlife. Water runoff from residential and commercial sites can be captured and filtered by marginal plants.
- Marginal plants reduce the effects of stormwater, provide bio-infiltration, and can out-compete nonnative invasive plants.
- Examples of marginal plants: cattail (*Typha*), cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus* – it actually melts snow!), iris (*I. versicolor*), lotus (*Nelumbo*), red-twig and yellow-twig dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), willow (*Salix* – easy to coppice to provide natural plant stakes), river birch (*Betula nigra*), marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*), hibiscus, giant coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*), golden club (*Orontium aquaticum*), pickerelweed (*Pontederia cordata*), pitcher plant (*Sarracenia*)
- Marginal woody plants: buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*), alder (*Alnus*), elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*), Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginicus*), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), winterberry holly (*Ilex verticillata*), sweetshrub (*Clethra alnifolia*), baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*)
- More unusual marginal plants: Bur-reed (*Sparganium eurycarpum*), seed box (*Ludwigia alternifolia*), swamp pink (*Helonias bullata*), grass pink orchid (*Calopogon*), lady tress orchid (*Spiranthes odorata*), bladder nut (*Staphylea pinnata*)
- Design tips – determine the intent of the project; combine function and aesthetics. When constructing a wetland or rain garden, determine the capacity, how overflow will be handled, what is the water source (road runoff, brackish water, spring source). Layer plant material properly. Fill gaps with plugs, and plan for plants to move as they find their niche. Avoid risks to nearby water bodies; don't disrupt downstream habitat. Monitor for invasives and remove them immediately.
- Test your output – water quality can be tested at the source and the outflow of a stormwater feature to demonstrate the effectiveness of plants' ability to improve water quality.
- Match your soils between the native soil and the soil in your plugs or potted plants.
- Choose plants by considering the native habitat of the plants you want to use – do they grow naturally on river banks, directly in water, in or near salt water, in floodplains, tidal marsh??
- Think about designing for wildlife – add fallen and semi-submerged trees to a constructed wetland to provide habitat for fish, amphibians, birds

- Longwood Garden offers classes in designing and maintaining native wetland gardens. Visit their website for information and registration.
- Upcoming Opportunities:
  - **Edge of the Woods Wild Ones Member Discount Days** – 10% discount for Wild Ones members for the month of September. Your membership card can be downloaded from the national website, [wildones.org](http://wildones.org)
  - **Philadelphia Honey Festival** – Friday, Sept 10 at Glen Foerd on the Delaware, 5-8 p.m.; Saturday, Sept. 11, at Wyck House 10-4; Sunday Sept. 12 at Bartram’s Garden 10-2.
  - **Sept 13.** Free lecture by Doug Tallamy, Asplundh Concert Hall, West Chester University, 5 p.m., registration required ([wcgreenteam.com/](http://wcgreenteam.com/))
  - **Sept. 22-24**, Plan It Native Landscapes Conference. <https://planitnative.org/program/>
  - **Oct. 5** Free webinar, The Nature of Oaks, with Doug Tallamy. Register here: [wildones.org/tallamy-oaks-registration/](http://wildones.org/tallamy-oaks-registration/)
  - **Oct. 20** Free webinar, Wasps: Their Biology, Diversity, and Role as Beneficial Insects, with Heather Holm. Register here: [wildones.org/heather-holm-webinar-on-wasps/](http://wildones.org/heather-holm-webinar-on-wasps/)
  - **Wild Ones SEPA chapter meeting schedule:** Oct. 6 (Identifying and Controlling Invasives), Nov. 11 (Fall Dividing), Dec 8 (Winter Seed Sowing)
- **View the recording of the meeting** on our Youtube channel here: <https://youtu.be/DLIRcBR4JdY>

**Follow us on Facebook and Instagram** for updates on planting natives in southeastern PA.