



NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES

SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

# July 2022 Newsletter

[sepa.wildones.org](http://sepa.wildones.org)

## July Meeting Highlights

### Chapter Business.

- Chapter membership stands at 148.
- We are still looking for a Community Projects Committee Chair so we can get more native plants in the ground by working with parks, HOAs, and other community groups.
- For National Pollinator Week in June, our chapter had a table at the Gardening for Our Endangered Pollinators event in Montgomery County.
- The member's garden featured during last month's meeting was included on the recent Phoenixville summer garden tour. Our chapter contributed 45 native plants to be given out to participants on the tour to encourage them to plant more natives.
- [Firefly Watch](#) combines an annual summer evening ritual with scientific research. Join a network of community scientists around the country by observing your own backyard, and help scientists map fireflies.
- Wild Ones' Pennsylvania chapters and the Pennsylvania Native Plant Society (PNPS) once again are teaming up on an email campaign to ask our members to help ban more invasive ornamental plants from sale in Pennsylvania. Last fall, Pennsylvania banned its first invasive ornamental plants -- Japanese barberry and callery pear. The

support of members of Wild Ones, PNPS, and like-minded organizations across the state was critical to the success of the state's addition of these nonnative invasive ornamentals to the list of banned plants. The Controlled Plant and Noxious Weed Committee will meet Thursday, July 21, on line to consider adding burning bush (*Euonymus alatus*) and several nonnative privets to the list.

Wild Ones and PNPS will be sending an email to our members, asking you to submit a public comment to the committee via email or U.S. mail in support of banning these additional plants. Sample messages will be included, along with the committee's contact information. Please take a few minutes to send an email to support this effort. Thank you!

- According to a petition on [change.org](http://change.org), Home Depot and other garden centers are selling plants that are listed as invasive in many other states. Invasive plants overrun and displace our native plants and rob our wildlife of the food they need to eat. They cost taxpayers billions of dollars in removal efforts. You can sign a petition to be sent to Home Depot's CEO [here](#).

## Historic Bondsville Mill Park Gardens -- Where History and Nature Blend and Inspire

Presented by Beth Watts

This 47-acre public park in Downingtown is being transformed from an abandoned industrial site into a space for passive recreation which preserves the history and natural habitat of the site.

The site includes the remnants of a textile mill, the Bond Woolen Factory, which produced uniforms for

### WO-SEPA 2022 Meeting Schedule

Aug. 11: Native Plant Guilds for Four-Season Interest

Sept. 7: Native Trees for Your Home Landscape

Oct. 13: To be announced

Nov. 9: Native Shrubs for Four-Season Interest

Dec. 1: Collecting and Saving Native Seeds

Recordings of past meetings are available  
on our [youtube channel](#).

Visit us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

Union soldiers during the Civil War, automobile upholstery fabric in the 30s and 40s, and fabric for Air Force uniforms during WWII. Originally a water-powered mill, the operation upgraded to steam power and then electricity. The small village of Bondsville once had its own post office and general store to serve workers and their families.

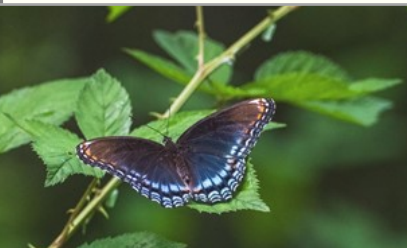
By 1970 the factory had closed, and developers were eyeing the site. In 2005, East Brandywine Township purchased the property using municipal open space funds. Since then, a group of dedicated volunteers has been clearing the property and rehabilitating the deteriorated historic buildings.

The park opened to the public in 2015 with the purpose of studying, restoring, and preserving the natural habitat and educating the public to respect and care for nature in their backyards. The park also aims to interpret the history of the mill and those who lived and worked there.

### How Does a Garden Grow?

The park's nature restoration project takes its inspiration from Professor Doug Tallamy's work demonstrating the importance of restoring native plant habitat.

The first project was a **Butterfly Garden**, planted in 2017 after the area was cleared of oriental bitter-sweet, Norway maples, and other invasive plants. Native milkweeds soon appeared, and new plants including *Lobelia cardinalis*, beebalm (*Monarda* spp), and asters were added to create a habitat for butterflies and other pollinators.



The park includes a **Monarch Way Station** to provide resources for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. Creating a Monarch Way Station can be as simple as adding milkweeds to your garden to support spring and summer breeding, and nectar plants to sustain monarchs on their fall migration.

Volunteers collect monarch caterpillars from the park's milkweed plants and raise them on site.

The display allows

visitors to observe the various growth stages, from caterpillar to butterfly.



A separate **Milkweed Garden** was created to grow more milkweed to feed all the caterpillars that were collected. Volunteers used the lasagna gardening technique to create beds near the gravel parking lot. Last January, the park partnered with the local Environmental Advisory Committee to pre-

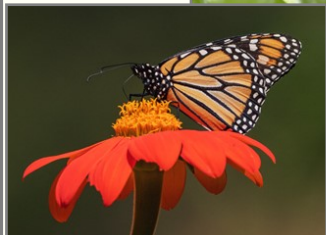
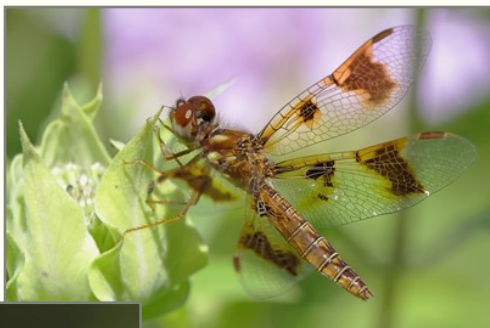


sent a community workshop on starting milkweed plants from seed using winter sowing techniques.

Along the way, the volunteers have learned some interesting [conservation techniques](#). Research indicates that monarchs may lay more eggs on the new growth of milkweed than on older stems. Volunteers now cut back some milkweed stems in early July so the plant will produce new shoots.



The plants in the **Pollinator Garden** provide nectar from early spring -- witch hazel (*Hamamelis verna*) and skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) -- through the asters that flower until a hard fall frost. This garden includes some American natives from further south, including Mexican sunflower (*Tithonia rotundifolia*) and zinnia, because the flower heads of these plants provide flat landing areas that are perfect for nectar-feeding insects and also for photography.



## Homegrown National Park

Plants, animals, and other organisms in an ecoregion have evolved together to create a unique and intricate web of interactions. Native plants are critically important to wildlife and the preservation of biodiversity. Inspired by University of Delaware Professor Doug Tallamy, [Homegrown National Park](#) is a grassroots call to action to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants and creating new ecological networks.

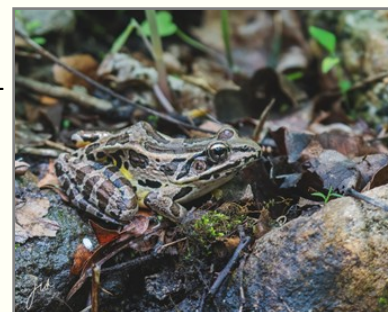
Homegrown National Park's goal is to plant 20 million acres of habitat, or half the area now covered by lawns on private property. The website features a community-based [interactive map](#) that shows each person's contribution to planting native by state, county, and zip code. Add your property to the map!



## Planting Native

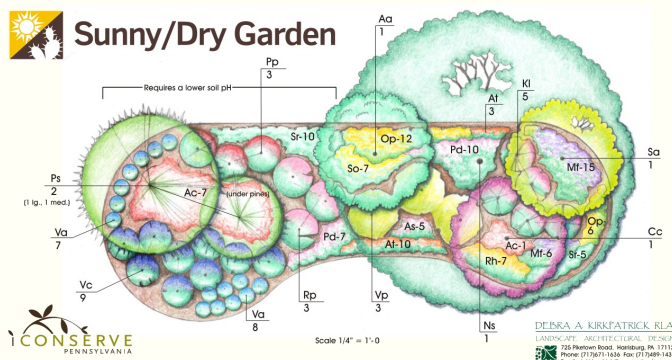
Here are some tips for planting native:

- Shrink the lawn.
- Plant keystone plants -- 5% of our native plants provide 75% of caterpillar foodwebs; 14% provide 90%). Keystone woody plants include oaks, cherries, willows, birches, cottonwoods, and elms. Keystone perennials are goldenrods, asters, and sunflowers.
- Include plants for specialist pollinators -- milkweeds, asters, and blueberries.
- Create caterpillar pupation sites under your trees -- leaf mulch, rocks, dead wood, logs, and loose soil instead of turf grass.



## Planting for Birds

Planting natives will support birds as well as caterpillars and other insects. Natives provide insects, nectar flowers for hummingbirds, and berries for fall and winter. DCNR's website has [templates for native plantings](#) for various sites: sunny and dry, sunny and moist, shady and dry, and shady and moist. Each template includes a plant list.



## Race Walk Garden

In 2021, park volunteers started construction on an area behind the mill buildings that includes the original mill race, which delivered water from the nearby creek directly to the mill's water wheel. The Race Walk Garden will preserve the southern section of the mill race and demonstrate that ecology and aesthetics can be merged to create an attractive ornamental garden. Plants for the Race Walk Garden were purchased with grant funds from the Hardy Plant Society and the Chester County Beekeepers Association.

## Culp's Clearing

Named in honor of garden designer and author David Culp, a dedicated park volunteer, this area in front of the mill buildings will be used as a teaching tool to focus on water-wise, low-maintenance native alternatives to turf grass. The importance and interconnection of pollinators, invertebrates, birds, and humans will be part of the educational theme.

The plantings are designed for seasonal color throughout the year, so there will always be something new to see. This area will include over 19,000 plants, including little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), 1,100 *Asclepias tuberosa*, 75 giant hyssop (*Agastache* 'Purple Haze'), four sumac species, and many asters. Something so ambitious could not be

accomplished without the park's staunch group of regional and local volunteers.

Construction of the garden and the adjacent parking area and ADA-accessible pathways will be funded by grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Chester County Department of Parks and Preservation, and by East Brandywine Township.

## Amphitheater Gardens

The newest project began earlier in 2022 with the removal of invasive plants from an area behind the mill buildings which forms a natural amphitheater. Native shrubs for this area will include holly (*Ilex opaca*), sheep laurel (*Kalmia angustifolia*), *Leucothoe*, *Illicium*, *Pieris*, mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), bottlebrush buckeye (*Aesculus parviflora*), *Hydrangea arborescens*, serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), blueberry, and *Clethra*.



Visitors can see interesting native plants along the park's trails at any time of year, including skunk cabbage, trilliums, Virginia bluebells, mayapple, wisteria, milkweed, ferns, and witch hazel.

## Nature Library

Located in one of the old mill buildings, the library includes books on nature, habitat, gardening, and landscaping for adults and children.

## Programs

The park holds many events for the public, such as scavenger hunts, bird counts, monarch migration days, workshops, and nature hikes.

[Bondsville Mill Park](#), 1647 Bondsville Rd, Downingtown PA 19335



<https://www.facebook.com/>



## Pledge To Rewild -- Join Forces with Your Community

In January, we invited readers to start off 2022 with a [pledge to rewild](#). This initiative by the [Wild Seed Project](#) aims to meet the challenge of biodiversity loss head-on by restoring a minimum of 70% of native plant biomass to support healthy populations of butterflies, bees, birds, and insects that are crucial to a functioning ecosystem.

The pledge to rewild includes 10 action steps to help you get started. This month, we're focusing on various aspects of community-wide rewilding.

### Inspire Your Neighbors

Although every yard makes a difference, one rewilded property in isolation will not provide the area needed for sufficient habitat. We need to increase awareness about the importance of rewilding in our communities and work with our neighbors to connect habitat that has been fragmented and degraded by development, private property ownership, and poor landscape practices. By building networks and joining our efforts and acreage, we can create a more resilient future.

You can start by inspiring others. One way to spark conversation is to add a yard sign to your rewilding garden to offer insight into the work you are doing. Neighbors are sure to stop and ask questions.



You can offer to share native plants if you have extras, or organize a neighborhood trip to a local native plant nursery.

### Rewilding on Municipal Property

Townships, boroughs, and cities have control over which plants are installed in public areas, such as

parks, historic sites, and municipal buildings. This can add up to hundreds or even thousands of acres of potential habitat. In 2018, Delaware's New Castle County ordered county departments to use only native plants when installing new landscaping or reworking existing landscaping on county property.

When and how municipalities mow their parks, trails, open space, and other areas can make a big difference for wildlife. Creating and managing "no mow zones" in appropriate places allows native plants to grow and wildlife to flourish. It also saves cities and counties (and taxpayers) money through reduced maintenance costs. The National Wildlife Federation encourages cities with no-mow zones to post signage and educate the public about the benefits to both wildlife and people.

The National Wildlife Federation's [Community Wildlife Habitat™](#) program partners with municipalities and neighborhoods to help them become more wildlife-friendly. The program promotes the use of native plants and the elimination of pesticides and chemicals through outreach to community members and local officials. Lancaster County, Nockamixon and Haycock Townships (Bucks County), Westtown Township (Chester County), Hatboro Borough (Montgomery County), and Newark, DE, are all NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat communities.

At the state level, last fall Pennsylvania passed a [law](#) requiring PennDOT to plant only native vegetation along state highways.

### Rewilding for New Construction

Lower Makefield Township in Bucks County, PA, amended its ordinances to require 100% native plants and trees in new developments. Municipal planning commissions and environmental advisory boards or commissions (EABs/EACs) often update the local subdivision ordinances to include lists of recommended and prohibited plants in new developments. Reach out to your municipal officials if you're interested on serving on such a board, or to encourage them to update local ordinances to require native plantings.

In 2019, a nationwide home-building company partnered with [National Wildlife Federation](#) to certify thousands of acres of community open space as wildlife habitat. The company pledged to apply NWF's certified Wildlife Habitat standards to current and future community parks and open space in its developments.

**Plant This Not That -- Plants for Containers** Some gardeners like to plant in containers, whether for decorative accents or to provide welcome color and ecological benefit in non-soil locations like balconies and rooftops. Many common container plants are nonnatives bred specifically for colorful foliage or a long period of bloom. Below are some native plants that work in containers and also support native insects and birds. You can let these plants overwinter in their pots or just replant them every year, if that's easier. Either way, you can elevate your containers to the next level by planting native! Because nonnative container plants are so different from natives, we won't try to offer native alternatives. Instead, the natives listed here can be used to create container plantings for sun or shade to attract native insects and birds, provide important habitat, and beautify your surroundings.

<p><b>Thrillers</b> -- These are tall plants or those with large or colorful foliage or flowers that immediately catch the eye.</p>	<p><b><i>Agastache foeniculum</i> (anise hyssop)</b> Tall perennial with anise-scented foliage and lavender flowers spikes all summer in full sun. Stems can be cut back in spring when they reach 1 foot to control the plant's height. Attracts butterflies and native bees.</p> <p><b><i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i> (ox-eye sunflower), <i>Rudbeckia hirta</i> (black-eyed Susan)</b> Bright yellow rayed flowers on stiff, upright stems. Blooms in full sun all summer. Ox-eye sunflower can be cut back in spring when stems reach 1 foot to control the plant's height.</p> <p><b><i>Salvia farinacea</i> (mealycup sage), <i>S. coccinea</i> (Texas sage)</b> Spikes of blue (<i>S. farinacea</i>) or scarlet (<i>S. coccinea</i>) flowers attract scores of native pollinators all summer. Tender perennials.</p> <p><b><i>Delphinium carolinianum</i> (Carolina larkspur), <i>D. exaltatum</i> (tall larkspur)</b> Dramatic spikes of showy blue flowers in midsummer.</p>
	<p><b><i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> (little bluestem), <i>Elymus hystrix</i> (bottlebrush grass)</b> Both add color, texture, and a strong vertical element for sun (little bluestem) or shade (bottlebrush grass).</p>
<p><b>Spillers</b> -- These plants fill in around the edges and can drape over the sides of pots. Trim back as needed during the season.</p>	<p><b><i>Clematis virginiana</i> (virgin's bower)</b> Fast-growing vine with clusters of fragrant white flowers in late summer followed by silky seed heads. Normally a climber, this plant can be trained to twine around the edges of a planter and drape over the sides. Host plant for clematis clear-wing moth.</p> <p><b><i>Phlox stolonifera</i> (creeping phlox), <i>P. subulata</i> (moss phlox)</b> Mat-forming plants for shade or sun, respectively. Purple (<i>P. stolonifera</i>) or blue/pink (<i>P. subulata</i>) flowers in spring. Attractive foliage will spill or drape over pot edges all summer.</p> <p><b><i>Fragaria virginiana</i> (wild strawberry)</b> Bright green trifoliate leaves and small white flowers in spring, followed by small edible strawberries. Keep runners cut back to control draping.</p>
<p><b>Fillers</b> -- These plants are medium height and can be combined to provide continuous color from spring through fall.</p>	<p><b><i>Eurybia divericata</i> (white wood aster), <i>Aster cordifolius</i> (blue wood aster)</b> A profusion of white or light blue daisy-like flowers in late summer to fall. Both thrive in part shade. Important food source for late-season pollinators.</p> <p><b><i>Scutellaria incana</i> (downy skullcap)</b> Adaptable perennial with spikes of blue-violet tubular flowers in summer; attracts hummingbirds, bees, and butterflies.</p> <p><b><i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> (butterfly milkweed)</b> Bushy medium-height plant with clusters of bright orange flowers in summer; nectar source and larval host plant for monarch butterfly.</p>
	<p><b><i>Echinacea</i> spp., <i>Ratibida pinnata</i> (coneflowers)</b> Purple, yellow, or white rayed flowers on sturdy foliage all summer. <i>R. pinnata</i> foliage is finely cut; <i>Echinacea</i> foliage takes up more space.</p> <p><b><i>Heuchera americana</i>, <i>H. villosa</i> (coral bells)</b> Attractive large scalloped leaves, sometimes with contrasting leaf veins or colorful marbling. Airy sprays of tiny flowers in late spring.</p> <p><b><i>Penstemon digitalis</i> (foxglove beardtongue), <i>P. hirsutus</i> (downy beardtongue)</b> Attractive basal leaves all season, graceful spikes of white or lavender flower in early summer.</p>
	<p><b><i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>, <i>C. rosea</i> (threadleaf coreopsis)</b> Mounded plants with delicate thread-like foliage and masses of yellow (<i>C. verticillata</i>) or pale pink (<i>C. rosea</i>) flowers all summer.</p> <p><b><i>Carex pennsylvanica</i>, <i>C. rosea</i>, <i>C. appalachica</i>, <i>C. flaccosperma</i>, <i>C. muskingumensis</i> (sedges)</b> The grass-like foliage of sedges can be fine or wide, bright green or tinged with blue. Airy flower spikes in summer provide a graceful accent. <i>C. muskingumensis</i> also works as a spiller.</p>
	<p><b><i>Verbena bonariensis</i> (tall verbena)</b> Airy stems topped with small clusters of lavender flowers all summer are bee and butterfly magnets.</p>



## Diary of a Rewilder

This year, we're focusing on a different step in the rewilding process each month. If you're new to rewilding, you might be thinking -- how does this work in practice? Here we share with you some personal experiences that could help with your own rewilding projects.

### The Site

This month we're visiting a gardener who has been working on her property for 20 years. The property is over 3 acres, but 1 acre is wooded and not (yet) part of the rewilding work. The remainder of the property consists of woods edges, garden beds, and two small lawns (3500 ft<sup>2</sup> and 1800 ft<sup>2</sup>).

### The Projects

As the owner pointed out, the entire property is the project! The owner started rewilding with natives just 2 years ago, so many of the projects involved reworking beds that were filled with nonnatives. A good example is this area bordering a section of the stone driveway. It's in partial shade, about 60 feet long and less than 8 feet deep. Over the years it became overgrown with Chinese forget-me-not and vinca. The occasional sedge, penstemon, and ostrich fern volunteers were the only natives.



Last fall, the owner and a friend dug out all the nonnatives and planted more penstemon (*P. digitalis* and *P. hirsutus*), skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*), golden grousel (*Packera aurea*), golden alexander (*Zizia aurea*), catchfly (*Silene caroliniana*), and downy wood mint (*Blephilia ciliata*). A few nonnative purple iris were allowed to stay.

Anchor shrubs are winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), aromatic sumac (*Rhus aromatica*), and bottlebrush buckeye (*Aesculus parviflora*). Groundcover plants include pussytoes (*Antennaria plantaginifolia*), prostrate white heath aster (*A. ericoides* 'Snow Flurry'), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), creeping phlox (*P. stolonifera*), wild violet, and sedges (*Carex blanda* & *C. flaccosperma*). Surprise volunteers were New York

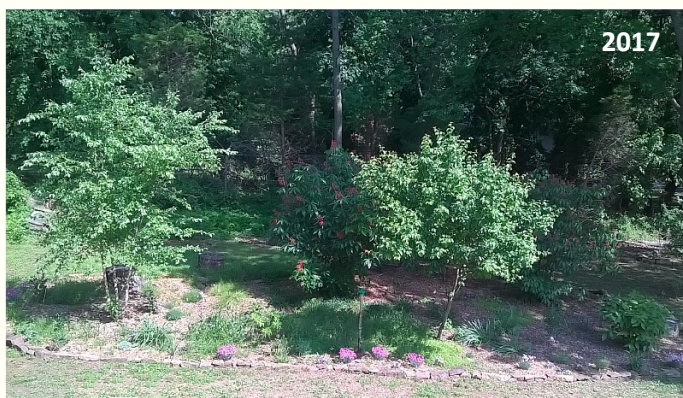
ironweed (*Vernonia novaboracensis*) and anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), indicating that the site gets more sun than expected. This gardener looks to volunteers as indicator plants for information about a site's sun, soil, and water conditions. Penstemons, New York ironweed, ox-eye sunflower, anise hyssop, wild ginger, and several sedges are some of the welcome volunteers in many places on this property.



### Weeds to Meadow

When the owner moved to the property 20 years ago, the non-wooded area was an abandoned agricultural field, with all the weed seeds that go with it. One project involved reclaiming the weed-filled back yard. The area was seeded with a tallgrass meadow mix, which worked reasonably well in the sunny part but not under the large trees.

After fighting a losing battle with tree roots and shade, the owner removed two Norway maples and created a large planting bed anchored by a river birch (*Betula nigra*) and three red buckeyes (*Aesculus pavia*). A band of grass was seeded all around the bed for access.

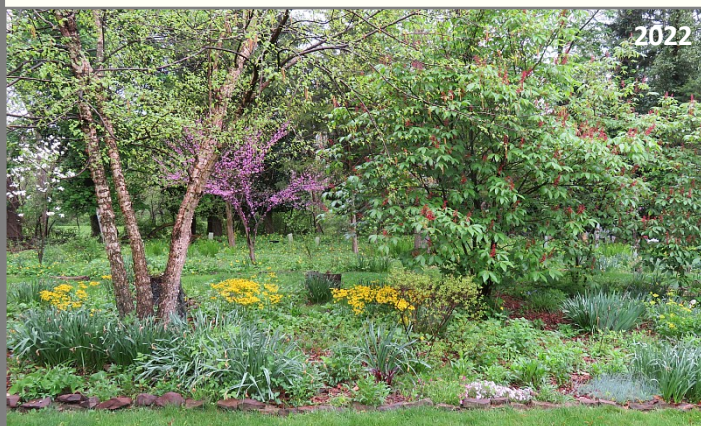


Five years later, the birch is 25 feet tall and provides shade for golden grousel (*Packera aurea*), golden alexander (*Zizia aurea*), and blue wood aster (*A. cordifolius*). Wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), Virginia knotweed (*Persicaria virginiana*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), New York ironweed (*Vernonia novaboracensis*), and several sedges (*Carex pennsylvanica* and *C. blanda*) have



*Diary of a Rewilder, continued from page 7*

volunteered to fill the bare spots. Sweet fern (*Comptonia peregrina*), gray-headed coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), and several penstemons fill the area in front of the buckeyes, with *Phlox subulata* and *Carex pennsylvanica* along the edges.



The owner is still adding plants wherever there are niches. American bellflower (*Campanula americana*) now forms a large patch after being introduced 2 years ago. Last year's seed-grown wreath goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*) and pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*) should start blooming later this summer.

The tallgrass meadow was dominated by switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*) for the first few years. Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) was part of the abandoned field's weed seed legacy and resprouted quickly, expanding each year. Japanese honeysuckle has also made inroads. Bright spots in the meadow are common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), which showed up as a welcome volunteer, and ox-eye sunflower (*Helianthus helianthoides*), which is spreading happily from seed-grown plants.



The owner's plan is to burn the meadow in the fall and then remove the honeysuckle vines by hand this winter. The meadow has been mowed every other year but never burned, so the fire could allow

different natives the chance to germinate.

This gardener likes to define different areas of the property with hardscape elements like fencing, paths, and stone or log edging. The tallgrass meadow is separated from the back lawn by a short fence covered with honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*). The fence inspired the owner to shrink the lawn by adding a flower bed in front of it this year.



One of the biggest challenges on the property is the old-school 6-foot-high sand mound in the front yard. Normally these look like primitive, grass-covered burial mounds. This gardener chose to lay brick paths on the top of the mound and plant the different areas.

The west-facing slope includes five blueberries and a sour cherry tree, fenced to exclude the deer that otherwise would decimate them. This year the owner added cranberries (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*), which don't need to be grown in a bog.

On the south face of the mound, the gardener used native stones to build two sets of steps. The steps and the brick path at the top define an area that is half in sun and half shaded by a nearby maple. Given the extremely steep slope, the area was difficult to maintain and had been overgrown with nonnative Chinese forget-me-not, Canada thistle, false strawberry, and Japanese stiltgrass.

In 2020, the owner dug out all the weeds and planted the shade half with 25 plugs each of *Carex appalachica* and *C. pennsylvanica*. Volunteer penstemon, columbine, and jumpseed (*Persicaria virginiana*) quickly filled in the gaps.

The sunny half was replanted with natives that tolerate sunnier conditions: aromatic aster (*Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*), threadleaf coreopsis (*C. verticillata* and *C. rosea*), blue mist flower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*), *Asclepias tuberosa*, and mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum incanum*). Edging plants include *Phlox stolonifera*, *Tiarella cordifolia*, wild ginger, and *Iris cristata* in shade, and pros-



trate heath aster (*A. ericoides* var. 'Snow Flurry'), *Phlox subulata*, *Gaillardia aristata*, *Rudbeckia hirta*, and *Potentilla tridentata* in sun. Violets, penstemons, and New York ironweed volunteer freely throughout this bed.



The east face of the mound is this year's challenge. Fifty feet long and steeply sloped, it has been overgrown for years with Chinese forget-me-not, mugwort, daylilies, dock, and Japanese stiltgrass. Complicating any rewilding are hundreds of daffodils. Anything planted here will need to be able to emerge through the thick foliage that follows their flowers. The owner's theory is that if mugwort and daylilies can do that, so can some hardy natives.



This year the owner is mowing and weed whacking the area to keep the nonnatives cut to the ground, in order to starve the roots. Ostrich fern had volunteered in the shaded areas and was left standing. White avens (*Geum canadense*), honewort (*Cryptotaenia canadensis*), and jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*) appeared in the shade created by the ferns, once the invasives were removed.

The owner's plan for rewilding this large area is to attack it in small patches. On cool mornings, she will dig up a small area of daylilies and replant it with volunteer anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), Texas sage (*Salvia coccinea*), and tall verbena (*V. bonariensis*), which colonize the sunny top of the mound freely. They should reseed and fill in between the perennials. Careful transplanting and

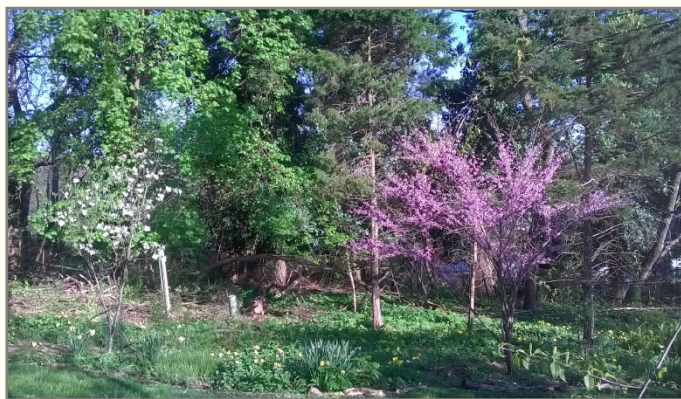
follow-up watering allow the transplants to thrive even in July's heat.

When the weather cools down this fall, any remaining invasives will be dug out and replaced with seed-grown perennials that thrive in sun and spread aggressively to crowd out any returning nonnatives. These will include coneflowers (*Echinacea pallida* and *E. paradoxa*), goldenrods (*Solidago rigida* and *Euthamia graminifolia*), bee-balm (*Monarda fistulosa* and *M. didyma*), ox-eye sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*), and asters (*A. oblongifolius* and *Symphotrichum cordifolia*). Although blue wood aster is browsed by deer in the woods here, the owner has discovered it volunteering freely in the tallgrass meadow, where it is protected from browsing by surrounding grasses.

### Edge Habitats

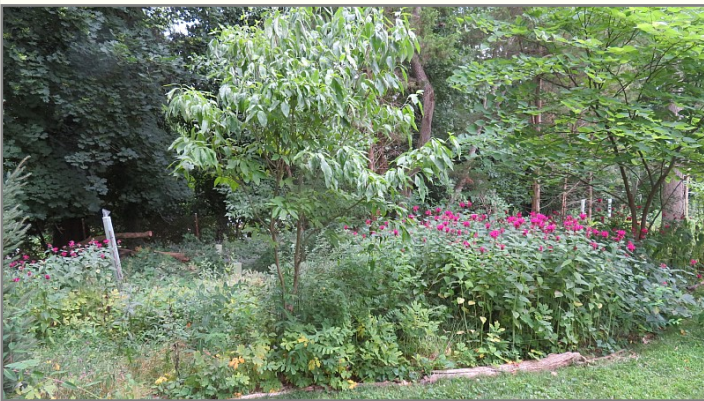
One of the newest areas to be rewilded is the edge of the woods along the property line. Ignored for years, this 300'x30' area is shaded by mature trees on the neighboring property but contained only successional growth -- a few cedars, sassafras, and box elder -- along with a large number of mature invasive bush honeysuckles.

The chain saw took care of the invasives, opening up large areas to more sun. These were replanted last year with shrubs and small trees that thrive in edge habitats, including winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), buckeye (*Aesculus parviflora*), persimmon (*Diosporos virginiana*), dogwoods (*Cornus racemosa* and *C. florida*), and viburnums (*V. dentatum* and *V. prunifolium*).



The owner pulled out a lot of garlic mustard in this area last winter and planted *Packera aurea* to provide competition. Volunteer ostrich fern (*Matt-euccia struthiopteris*), enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea canadensis*), and celandine poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*) quickly filled in many areas.

The owner expects to be pulling residual garlic mustard seedlings again this winter, but after that the seed bed should be substantially diminished. Competition from the surrounding natives should take care of any remaining seedlings.



The owner is also growing out woodland sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*), wood asters (*A. cordifolius* and *Eurybia divaricata*), Indian physic (*Porteranthus stipulatus*), wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), more penstemons, downy skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*), golden alexander (*Zizia aurea*), *Anemone virginiana*, big-leaf aster (*Eurybia macrophylla*), blue-stem goldenrod (*Solidago caesia*), beebalm (*Monarda didyma* and *M. fistulosa*), bellflower (*Campanula americana*), and bottlebrush grass (*Elymus hystrix*) to fill in the remaining spaces. Many of these plants eagerly reseed or spread via rhizomes, which is a quick way to rewild a larger area like this.

### Volunteers

Native volunteers are a great asset in our rewilding efforts. They increase habitat diversity beyond what we can find at nurseries and sometimes even what

we can grow from seed. Many native volunteers are eager spreaders or self-seeders and will help to fill in an area that's being rewilded.

Site preparation is key to encouraging volunteers. Removing nonnatives (other than lawn grass) by digging them out or cutting stems off below the soil level allows other seeds the opportunity to sprout. Sure, you'll get opportunistic weeds like Japanese stilt grass, crabgrass, chickweed, rocket cress, oxalis, garlic mustard, and plantain. But you'll likely also start to see natives like violets, celandine poppy, ferns, sedges, and less common plants like enchanter's nightshade, honewort, and avens. These plants used to grow along the edges of roads, fields, and lawns. Now that municipalities, farmers, and homeowners mow or spray these areas, many native colonizers of these disturbed habitats have disappeared.

When the owner stopped mowing along the edges of the woods, she noticed sedges starting to emerge -- *Carex pennsylvanica* in dry half-sunny areas, *C. blanda* in shade, and even *C. muskingumensis*. Now she carefully weed whacks or hand pulls invasives around the sedge clumps, leaving them to expand and crowd out more weeds.

This owner's advice for tackling rewilding projects is to go ahead and bite off more than you can chew, and then work at it one piece at a time. Backing into a big project is often what gets it done for this gardener: "I'll just dig out a few day-lilies here, and then I can transplant some goldenrod and beebalm, add a few sedges along the front, then we need some wood chips until the plants fill in -- oops, another little spot rewilded!"

## Events in the Community and Beyond

**July 30** Bondsville Mill Park Guided Tour (11 a.m. ) & picnic (noon). RSVP to [wildonesofsepa@gmail.com](mailto:wildonesofsepa@gmail.com)

### Educational Opportunities

**July 14** [Ecological Explorations: Pycnanthemum](#). Mt. Cuba Center, 10:00 a.m. - noon, \$29.

**July 16** [Planting for Specialist Pollinators](#). Mt. Cuba Center, 10:00 a.m. - noon, \$29.

**July 20** [Create a Backyard Meadow Garden](#). Mt. Cuba Center, 10:00 a.m. - noon, \$35.

**July 20** [Instant Hummingbird Garden](#). Mt. Cuba Center, 10:00 a.m. - noon, \$59.

**July 21** [PA's Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Plants](#). 7:00-8:30 p.m., zoom, free.

**July 30** [Knowing Native Plants: Meadow Magic](#). Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., in person \$30, virtual \$25.

**Aug. 6** [Planning a Multi-Season Garden](#). Mt. Cuba Center, 10:00 a.m. - noon, \$19.

**Aug. 11** [Journey into Native Plants](#). Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, 7:00-8:00 p.m., zoom, \$15.