



Growing through Education

Wildflowers

Winter 2009 • Volume 14, Number 4

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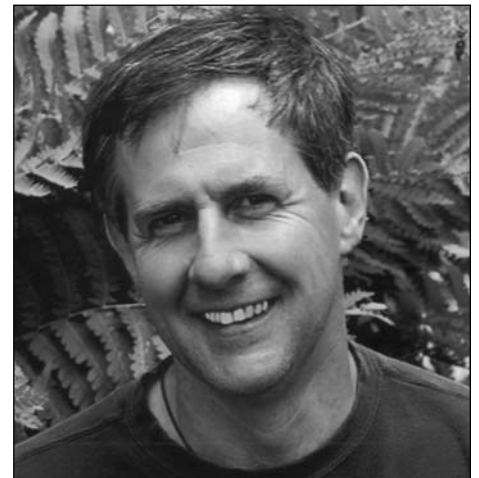
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BILL CULLINA

Bill Cullina was the featured speaker at the first WAM conference I attended in 2002. His enthusiastic presentation changed forever my attitude toward gardening. WAM is fortunate to have Bill return as the keynote speaker at this year's conference. He brings fresh information and renewed dedication in the use of native plants and their importance to local food webs. What follows is from a recent telephone interview with him.

Bill harbors a love of the natural world. He said, "for as long as I can remember I have been interested in nature. As a boy, I read all the books I could on nature, forests, ponds, sea shells, fish, plants and trees." As a youngster, growing up in Connecticut, he spent much of his time in the woods near his home and helped with the family vegetable garden. When he was eight years old he produced a herbarium, a collection of pressed flowers and leaves that he had gathered from the wild. These experiences would help shape his adult outlook on life.

Cullina began college as a biology student; like so many of us, he found statistics to be a challenge, so he turned his attention to psychology. His interest in nature as a child continued to influence him and after a visit with a friend who was studying horticulture he began to reconsider a degree in that discipline. He graduated from Hobart and Smith Colleges in New York State with a degree in psychology and then went on to earn a second bachelor's degree in plant sciences at the University of Connecticut. "The humani-



Bill Cullina

© William Cullina

ties and liberal arts courses have helped me with my writing and gave me a broader world view. They have been a valuable part of my education," he said and then continued, "I never thought I could make a living in horticulture. (Laughing) I was right!"

Bill recently moved to Maine to take a position as the plant and garden curator with the Costal Maine Botanical Gardens. He lives on Southport Island with his wife Melissa and their three children, seven year old son, Liam, and two year old twins; a daughter, Maeve and son, Ronan. When asked if he had a garden at home, he replied; "There isn't much time for gardening at home. All I really have time for

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WAM

By increasing awareness and knowledge, the Wildflower Association of Michigan encourages the preservation and restoration of Michigan's native plants and native plant communities.

~ ASSOCIATION NEWS ~



President's Note...

I hope that you are enjoying the renewed *Wildflowers* as much as I am. We have received many positive response about the new format and articles. In this issue, Kathy has included a great interview with our keynote speaker, Bill Cullina. I can't wait to hear and see his presentations on both days of the conference.

Last year's conference focused on the web of life; this year we have chosen the theme of "community". Both themes suggest cooperation and connection. For me, community has a very human component and raises the question, what is our role in the community as it pertains to our environment?

As preparations are underway for the **23rd Annual Wildflower Conference** in March, WAM is gathering a community of people who have a variety of experiences to share on this topic. Their knowledge will provide us with a better understanding of and insights to the roles we play in the larger community of all living things.

We will not have a separate educator's workshop this year, but are including presentations of interest to educators in the Sunday program. Of course, the grant award luncheon will take place on Sunday and it is always inspiring to hear the enthusiasm of the grant award recipients. It isn't too late to

apply for a Glassen grant for your school or group. Just go to the WAM website and click on grant program for information on how to apply.

We are not increasing the cost to attend the 2010 conference. As always, it offers a great venue, with wonderful speakers, informative exhibits, exciting vendors, and of course, delicious food. And don't forget, it's a fantastic opportunity to network with others who share your interests. Why not invite a friend to attend with you? And please watch our website, www.wildflowersmich.org for conference agenda updates.

Many of you know that WAM has had an exhibit booth at the Lansing Home & Garden Show for the past 10 years. The next show is scheduled for March 18 – 21, 2010, at the MSU Pavilion in East Lansing. This event continues to be a wonderful opportunity to educate people about wildflowers and native plants. But, we need your help to work the booth. You do not have to be an "expert" on wildflowers; all that's required is your interest and enthusiasm. So, please consider volunteering a few hours time to work with us. You can call me at 517-647-6010 to ask questions and/or to sign up. Thank you!

The landscape is dormant. The stalks of wildflowers are now covered by a blanket of snow, and yet are still providing cover and food for wildlife and a tranquil view for me. I wish you all a good winter season and I hope to see you in March!

Esther Durnwald, President

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www.wildflowersmich.org

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Due to other obligations *Judy Webber* has submitted her resignation from the newsletter committee. We appreciate the work she has done to get *Wildflowers* back on track. Thank you, Judy, for sharing your talent with us.

~ WILLIAM CULLINA ~

~ Continued from Page 1 ~

in my garden is editing what already grows there. So much comes up on its own. If you learn to recognize the plants and encourage them, you get what is growing naturally in an area. I had 150 species of native plants at my last house and discovered new ones all the time, all from the seed bank. By removing what is aggressive, thinning trees, recognizing seedlings and encouraging the unusual, one can produce what once grew in a particular spot.

What little gardening I can fit in I do myself. But, my kids help. The twins mostly just dig holes! They'll be more help in a year or two. My oldest son helps with the veggie garden and even raked all the leaves last autumn. I want my kids to know how to garden. I believe it's important that children know how to grow their own food organically. There is a children's garden where I work too. It teaches kids where food comes from. I think we all can do something to help kids understand the importance of gardening."

I asked Bill what his definition of a garden was. "In the broader sense, I think a garden is any place where you are exercising control over the natural order, whether in an extreme manner or more loosely, like at my house! I've put my foot in my mouth a few times and have learned to be quiet when it comes to the esthetics of other people's gardens because everyone thinks different things look good. Personally, I like a garden where things are planted in masses, where the individual or wild look is de-emphasized. I think masses give a garden a refined look. At the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens, native species set the baseline. We use wild blueberries, native shrubs and repeats of other common plants. This technique of using local native species creates a 'pride of place'. Native plant gardening puts forth the theory of bio-diversity by using plants that provide food for butterflies, caterpillars and birds. However, it is important not to make people feel guilty if they don't use native plants. It's better to teach by example. We do this in Maine and I know of public gardens in Colorado and Nebraska where they have done the same thing; they use native plants that grow in their specialized climates."

"Many people think native plants are not beautiful or ornamental, but lots are!" Cullina's favorite plants include; the serviceberries, wild blueberries, and both the tree and shrubby dogwoods. He recommends wild cherry, maple, and oak trees for their shade and because they are the best support for insects. Among the perennials, he suggests asters, goldenrods, coneflower, blazing star, and milkweeds; especially butterfly weed because they are beautiful and good starter plants for a new or transition garden. "They are immediate, obvious, and satisfying attractants for butterflies."

I was surprised by Bill's answer when asked about his position on the issue of local genotypes. Cullina said, "I'm not as concerned about the use of *strictly* local genotypes, because stirring up the gene pool a bit helps plants with survival. But, it is more

A garden without grasses is like a face without eyebrows.

William Cullina



Coastal Maine Botanic Gardens

© William Cullina

functional and practical to use plants that have evolved with the climate and soils. When I was employed at the New England Wildflower Society, I collected seed from hobblebush viburnums in Maine and in Connecticut. Seeds from both locations were planted at the Society's Nasami Farm in Connecticut; they

all germinated the same and the seedlings grew the same. However, when the weather turned hot, the Maine species withered, while those seedlings from Connecticut withstood the heat. This taught me how important it is to use populations that have adapted to local conditions.

When people are looking for native plants it is best to buy them from a native nursery whose plants are adapted to your growing conditions. Plants from other nurseries may be marked as *native*; but they may not be native to your area." Cullina further encourages the practice of editing your own yard, to use what is truly indigenous there. He says, "Plants from your seed bed are more apt to be acclimated to the climate, weather, pollinators, mycorrhizae, fungi, and

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~ WILLIAM CULLINA ~

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other soil conditions.”

For those of us who want to help restore balance to nature, Cullina is encouraging when he says, “don’t be afraid to just start! The best way to make an impact is to begin by converting your lawn to a native meadow or flower bed. An acre of grass doesn’t do anything, but converting as little as one-third of a lawn to native plants makes a huge difference. This can be controversial when done in a front yard.” Bill thinks the pristine lawn is a generational concept. He went on to say, “For post-World War II families, manicured lawns were highly desirable. In

twenty years this will not be a priority. Kids today are exposed to ecological issues and probably won’t be upset with a meadow in a neighbor’s yard. And native plants do not have to equal a wild garden. One can put plant species for caterpillars and birds in a traditional garden or border and still get rid of lawns.”

After the ambitious publication of six books in ten years, Bill is taking time off from writing to be with his family and settle into a new job. These days find him busy with his work of planning and establishing the botanical gardens by using masses of twelve to fifteen of the wild plants of Maine. Cullina says of his work, “The Coastal Maine gardens are only three

years old, so unlike many established public gardens they have a forward momentum as we establish new areas. And it’s fun!”

On the subject of writing another book, he responded, “Someday I would like to co-author a book with my wife, who is a botanist. There is nothing available about the plant communities of the Northwest Region and there really is a need for a book on this topic.” Let’s hope that someday soon this idea bears fruit. Considering his past publications it will be something to look forward to, even for us plant enthusiasts who live here in the Midwest.

Kathy Prelesnik

~ WAM GRANT GARDEN ~

ECOLOGY IN THE PARK

Depot Park is nestled in the center of the Village of Clarkston, Michigan. Divided by a millrace and connected by a stunning bridge, it is the location for countless activities year-round. The park’s gazebo is used for Concerts in the Park on Fridays in July and for weddings. The art festival takes place here in September, and the farmer’s market sets up across Depot Street on Saturdays from June through September. The children’s playground, a favorite destination for generations, is always busy with children and adults alike. Other visitors walk their dogs, ride their bikes, and relax on the numerous benches placed around the area.

The park includes over 35 acres of wetlands, with the Clinton River running through it and the Clarkston Village Hall located at its front. Also, now, thanks to a group of dedicated individuals who have come together and who call themselves the Clarkston Watershed Group (CWG), native plant gardens have been created in Depot Park to help educate visitors about native plant functions and beauty. Two of these gardens have been Glassen /WAM Grant recipients.

The first native planting was a rain garden, planted on River Day, June 10, 2006. The initial funding for this garden came



Depot Park Before the Gardens

Photo by Cory Johnston

from an ONPI Grant (Oakland Native Partnership Initiative - a collaboration of many groups and underwritten with funds from Oakland Wild Ones) with matching funds from River of Life and donations from others. I was asked to be part of the group to help with plant choices.

Never was there a better place for a rain garden. The location chosen was at the base of a steep hill coming off Depot Street, with additional paved parking in front of the park. During rainfalls water comes rushing swiftly downhill over the

asphalt and had eroded away almost all the lawn on its determined way to the millrace. This initial project stimulated interest in creating a master plan for the park, and April of 2008 saw the unveiling of Depot Park’s Master Plan as prepared by University of Michigan graduate students of the School of Natural Resources.

Our second native plant garden was the brainchild of Robyn Johnston, a CWG member, who noticed many native plants have “animal” names and wanted to create

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~ WAM GRANT GARDEN ~

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a plant "zoo" in the area between the children's playground and the millrace. In March of 2007 CWG was the lucky recipient of a Glassen/ WAM Grant to purchase plants for this project. We planted the first portion of the children's garden in the fall of 2007.

Using newspaper and mulch to suffocate the existing lawn, we planted through the mulch with the following plants: cardinal flower, lizard's tail, fox sedge, Canadian anemone, ox-eye sunflower, ostrich fern, crane's bill, butterfly weed, foxglove, beard-tongue, dog-tooth Daisy, and turtlehead. On that lovely October day children playing in the adjacent playground came over to visit and we enlisted their help with the planting.

The following spring we felt that we needed to create some sort of border to show where the plants were and where it was ok to walk. So, on River Day in June 2008, a woven willow fence was created by Bruce Clifton and Gary Cousino. Boy Scouts and other volunteers helped cut and weave willow branches and stems to outline the beds, giving the area a sort of "Hobbit-like" appearance. We have since added skunk cabbage, cowslip, and monkey flower in these beds near the water. On our most recent River Day, June 13, 2009, a new bed was created with a dog and cat theme using plants such as alternate leaf dogwood, Florida dogwood, spreading dogbane, and pussy toes.

The second Glassen/WAM Grant that we received was in spring of 2009 and has been used to create an expansion to the original rain garden. In addition to the WAM funding, we received additional funding from the City of Clarkston, and another generous donation from River of Life. Clarkston's Department of Public Works provided the equipment and manpower to prepare the bed for planting. In the excavation process, slabs of concrete were discovered just under the sod. These were removed and six yards of composted mulch was mixed with the base soil of sand and gravel to a depth of three feet. Plant choices were made by Colleen Schmidt (a CWG member, River of Life member, and landscape designer) and myself to complement the



Weeding the Rain Garden

Photo by John Meyland

existing rain garden, to introduce more sedges, and to accommodate a portion of the expansion in shade. The species we planted in the new portion of the garden are: hop sedge, fox sedge, palm sedge, blue flag iris, golden Alexander, Canadian anemone, golden ragwort, Bishop's cap, wild ginger, swamp milkweed, marsh fern, lady fern, wild geranium, tall meadow rue, red-osier dogwood, and tall white flat top aster.

Again on River Day, June 13, 2009, CWG members, River of Life Members, Girl Scouts and others came together and planted the new portion of the garden and weeded in the original planting. This was a grand, busy day! The Clarkston farmer's market set up in front of the planting area and vendors sold plants and garden art. In addition, the new "dog and cat" bed was being created in the children's garden. At the same time, elsewhere in the park, Brent Cousino, for his Eagle Scout project, along with other scout volunteers, was working to stabilize the banks of the Clinton River as it enters the park under M-15. He used live-staking with silky dogwood, inter-planted with swamp milkweed, and hauled logs to shore up eroded areas. What an amazing, busy day that was! There were people young and old; native plants being planted and tended; and water flowing through it all...Ecology in the Park.

Thanks to Lola Koch and Sharon Hurlbert, we now have a beautiful, educational rain garden sign. It is sited a few steps off the busy asphalt pathway and is very helpful; now visitors can understand what a rain garden does. Maintenance of the gardens is an ongoing necessity. These gardens are in a highly visible location and are seen year-round, so we all get together periodically to weed and edge. Other dedicated members of the Clarkston Watershed Group not yet mentioned include: Jim Brueck, Cory Johnston, Jim Reed, Elizabeth Wagner, Laura Gruzowski, Anne Clifton, Emily Duthinh, Mary Alice Cook, and John Meyland. These members and countless volunteers have truly made these gardens thrive in Depot Park.



Scouts Work on the Garden

Photo by John Meyland

**Trish Hacker Hennig,
Owner, American Roots**

~ SUPPORTING WAM'S GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAMS ~

As a member of WAM, you are undoubtedly aware of the excellent support we provide to schools, etc. through our Glassen/WAM educational grants program. Its support is described on our web site, www.wildflowersmich.org/, link to 'Grant Program.' And you are also undoubtedly aware of the economic problems currently existing everywhere. We were very fortunate to receive support from the Glassen Foundation last year, even though they were a victim of the stock market tumble. It was a testament to the value they place on our programs. The result however was that we funded fewer deserving programs at levels lower than before. This occurred despite the use of almost \$1,000 from the other meager funds available to support these efforts.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT! Did you know that WAM has 501 (c)(3) tax exempt status? A contribution to WAM, no matter how small (or how big!) will qualify. These monies will be used to provide additional registration scholarships to educators attending our annual meeting as well as to augment the monies gratefully received from the Glassen Foundation.

There will be opportunities to donate at the conference, so please look for them. But, we can use any donation received

NOW for our 2010 grant funding cycle. Please send your check to our treasurer Jean Weirich at 3947 St. Joseph, Grand Ledge, MI 48837 and include a note as to which fund you would like to support – Glassen/WAM Grants or WAM Scholarships. You will receive a thank you letter acknowledging your donation that will serve as a receipt for your 2009 taxes and have your name announced as a donor in a future WAM newsletter.

Thank you for being a member of WAM.

Robert Krueger, Ph.D.

WAM 1st Vice-president/Grant Chairman

Wildflowers features two Glassen grant gardens each year. If you are a past recipient of this grant and would like us to feature your garden, please contact: Kathy at bottletreegirl@yahoo.com

~ BOOKS FOR YOUR WINTER READING ~

Looking for something to read besides your favorite mysteries or romance novels? Here are a few, wildflower related books we have relaxed with.

The Wild Trees: A Story of Passion and Daring, Richard Preston, Random House Trade Paperbacks, Random House Inc, New York, NY 2007. So fascinating, it inspired us to go to California.

Oak: The Frame of Civilization, William Bryant Logan, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, NY. 2005. From the first oaks to the present day, what these trees are made of and what is made from them.

Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants: Brooklyn Botanic Garden All-Region Guide, C. Colston Burrell, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, NY. 2006. A guide to native plants that can seek and destroy the top 100 most unwelcome perennials, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees.

A Passion for Nature: The Life of John Muir, Donald Worster, Oxford University Press Ltd., New York, NY. 2007. There are several books by and about John Muir, we liked this one.

Dyes from Native Plants: A Practical Guide, Lynne Richards and Ronald J. Tyril., Timber Press, Portland, OR. 2005. Everything you need to know about using natural dyes.

The Michigan Botanist: A Journal of Great Lakes Botany, Elwood B. Ehrle, Volume 45, Number 2, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. (Call 269-471-3243) A listing of champion trees in Michigan and where to find them.

Wildflowers of the Western Great Lakes Region, James R. Wells, Frederick W. Case Jr., & Lawrence Mellichamp. Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bulletin 63, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 1999. A description of plant communities arranged by habitat; from shorelines and dunes to forests, fens and old fields. Great color photos.

Go Native: Gardening with Native plants and Wildflowers in the Lower Midwest, Carolyn Harstad, Indiana University Press, 1999. Garden designs, plant selection, soil preparation, delightful photos and more.

The Practical Entomologist: An Introductory Guide to Observing and Understanding the World of Insects, Rick Imes. A Fireside Book, published by Simon and Schuster Inc. New York, NY. 1992. A description of insects by class and how to identify them. Several projects are included. Educational.

Caterpillars; The Concise Field Guide to 120 Common Caterpillars of North America, Amy Bartlett Wright, Peterson First Guides, Houghton Mifflin, New York, NY. 1993. Photos and descriptions of butterfly larvae and what they eat.

~ BOOK REVIEW ~

Native Ferns Moss & Grasses

By William Cullina

Settle down in your favorite chair with a cup of hot chocolate on one of these cold, dark January evenings, pick up a book by **William Cullina**, and escape. Leaf through it and enjoy the beauty of his photos, or get serious and learn more about your favorite ferns or forbs. His inviting writing style caused me to read each book straight through. As I lingered over the delicious 'sight bites' on every page, I found myself basking in the quiet of a mossy knoll, strolling through a prairie inhaling the delicious scent of grasses, then sitting in the cool, golden shade of a stand of birch.

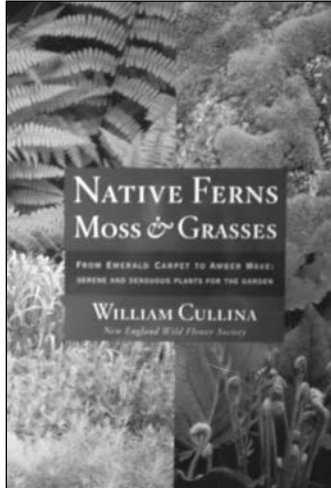
Filled with information and instructions in an easy to understand, photo-packed format, each book contains a definition of native plants and why they are important. There is an encyclopedia of native plants of the North American temperate zone, detailed information on how to propagate them, and several very useful appendixes. As if that were not enough, Cullina gives information on soil conditions, which plants are native where, height and width of plants, color, culturing, seed germination, appropriate growing sites, plant uses, sources for purchasing plants, alternatives to invasive or other alien species, native plant societies, botanical gardens where you can see native plants in a garden setting, charts for present and projected zone hardiness, and more. Whew! Bill really has it all covered.

I know of no other source where you find beautiful color photos, down-to-earth humor, and so much detailed information. Sadly, of his trilogy of books on native plants (*Growing and Propagating Wildflowers*, 2000; *Trees, Shrubs & Woody Vines*, 2002; and *Ferns, Moss & Grasses*, 2008, all published by Houghton Mifflin Company), it was difficult to choose which of William Cullina's books to review. They all are a joy, but space limitations in the newsletter allow for the review of only one.

Because they are so often overlooked, *Native Ferns, Moss and Grasses* was the winning choice. The author is unabashedly honest when he begins by saying, "I have to admit that although I am utterly charmed by ferns, soothed by mosses, and enthralled by grasses, I hesitated undertaking this book. I even thought about buying a collection of very realistic and decidedly colorful silk flowers to stage in the unfocused background of my grass and fern portraits. Is there any integrity anymore?"

In his discussion of ferns, Cullina states that they "generally have a certain 'ferniness' – soft texture, narrowly triangular, pinnately compound fronds; but ferns are also beautiful, undeniably alluring, and truly a calming and unifying presence in the garden." Arguably older than the hills, ferns "do for the shade garden what grasses do for the sun, harmonizing and uniting disparate colors and textures in a perfectly natural way." Unique in many ways, they have their own vocabulary: pinna, stipe, and sorus (just a few new words to add to your garden vocabulary).

Moss - we walk on it and hardly notice it's there. In their defense, Cullina tells us, "Gardening with mosses is both simi-



lar to and very unlike gardening with vascular plants, and just as rewarding. Moss grows everywhere. The most essential thing to remember about moss is its lack of roots and plumbing." He goes on to discuss the techniques of site preparation, transplanting, wild-collecting, getting them established, and maintaining them. Also included are a few words on 'blender propagation'. Yup, that is with your kitchen blender!

Of grasses, Cullina says, "They are so common and so much a part of the natural landscape that to leave them out of a garden is to force on it a pronounced artificiality that is often unintended." After describing the structure of grasses, a full encyclopedia of them and their attributes is presented.

Technical in some of his discussion, Cullina gives detailed propagation information on these wonderful gems for our native gardens. The author reminds us that, as is true of any plant species but especially among the grasses, "we must all be careful when importing a new plant-whether it is from Asia or from the other side of the Rockies. A safer path is to focus your attention on the plants that grow best in your own area, as these are not only truly native but often the best adapted to your particular conditions."

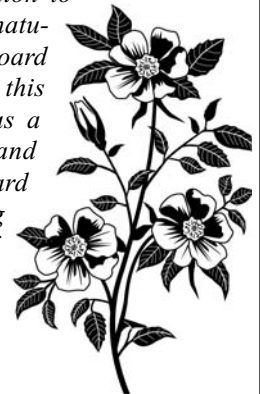
Bill Cullina's other books include *Understanding Orchids: An Uncomplicated Guide to Growing the World's Most Exotic Plants*, 2004, and the latest offering, *Understanding Perennials: A New Look at an Old Favorite*, released in spring of 2009, using the same format as the trilogy above. I guarantee that whatever your interests in gardening, all these texts will inform and delight you.

Veronica Lake, Staff Writer

Nancy Cutbirth Small

September 1, 1940 – November 27, 2009

It is with deep sadness that we announce that after a four year struggle with cancer, our fellow board member, Nancy Small passed away on November 27th. Nancy was tireless in her dedication to celebrating and appreciating our natural world; serving on the WAM board was just one form of expressing this love for living things. Nancy was a wellspring of ideas, direction and guidance for us in our work toward WAM's mission of increasing awareness and knowledge of Michigan's native flora and fauna. We will be forever grateful for her generous contribution of service and care.



~ WILDFLOWER CORNER ~

Ferns in the Garden

Of all the plants in the garden, ferns are stalwart allies, lending a sense of serenity and calmness to any space. Members of the phylum, Pteridophytes, these most interesting plants have been around for eons, with fossils of *Osmunda claytoniites* being found in Antarctica that date back 220 million years. Fossils of *Equisetum* (or horsetails) have been found in Michigan, dating back at least 280 million years, thus pre-dating the dinosaurs.

Ferns and their allies are the first plants to develop roots, stems, and leaves (as opposed to the algae and mosses). The roots are thin, wiry, black, and forking; they grow from a rhizome, which can be round in shape or elongated and thin. The rhizome in turn can be in the ground or grow above it, depending on the species. The stems (or stalks) also grow from the rhizome; they are flat or concave in front and rounded in the back. These in turn support the leaves, which can have a variety of shapes, from the very simple to extremely complex and feathery. The leaves are different according to the species, which is the main way the plants are identified. Within a species, the leaves can also vary, depending on whether they are sterile or fertile.

Reproduction is by means of spores, which develop in spore cases called *sori*. Sometimes they develop on the backs of the leaves, and sometimes they develop on separate, fertile leaves. When the spores are ripe, the parent plants literally fling them into the air where they are airborne, sometimes traveling hundreds or thousands of miles, which is the reason many of the same fern species are found on different continents. On reaching a suitable site, the spores develop into gametophytes, which eventually develop into the new plant.

For the gardener, the *Osmunda* fern is one of the best: it is easy to care for, long-lived, and stunning in appearance. The first of the *Osmundas* to consider is the cinnamon fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea* L.), which is one of the most striking of all ferns. It grows to a height of 2-5 feet and a width of 2-4 feet. Its most interest-



Cinnamon Fern

*Photo by R.A.Howard
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution*

ing aspect is the fertile fronds (which don't look like leaves at all), rising up in the middle of the plant. At first they are bright green, then gradually turn into a lovely cinnamon brown. The sterile leaves arch out from the rootstock, which is rather coarse-looking and slowly creeps along on the top of the ground, like a slowly-moving Brillo pad. In the fall the sterile fronds turn a lovely yellow to apricot color. There is a beautiful picture in William Cullina's *Native Ferns, Moss & Grasses*.

The next *Osmunda* is an interrupted fern (*O. claytoniana* L.). It, too, is quite large, being 2-4 feet tall and 3-4 feet wide. The fronds are very similar to cinnamon fern, with one important difference: the *sori* develop on fertile leaves that closely resemble the sterile leaves. About two thirds of the way up these leaves, dense clusters of *sori* develop, almost covering the leaflets. After the spores ripen, those leaflets wither away, leaving spaces on the stems, hence the common name.

Last, but certainly not least, is the royal fern (*O. regalis* L.), which truly lives up to its name, often reaching a height of six feet or more. (In *Native Ferns, Moss & Grasses*, another variety of royal fern is described which only reaches a height of 2-3 feet). In the sun, the leaves are a pale green; in the shade, they are a bright green with red stalks. Like the other *Osmundas*,

the leaves are erect, growing out of a huge rootstock, which can often be six inches high! The leaflets are widely spaced and oblong, so the plant is less feathery looking than other ferns. Like the interrupted fern, the fertile leaves also resemble the sterile ones. On the royal ferns, the light brown *sori* develop at the ends of leaves, where the leaflets are more compact. Wherever it is grown, this is truly a stunning plant and is a reminder of the ancient fern forests of long ago.

All of these ferns will grow in sun to light shade and like damp conditions, with the interrupted fern tolerating more dryness than the others. They are a must in the woodland garden and would be beautiful next to a pond. They may take a few years to develop but are well worth the wait. In general, all ferns are care-free, require no pruning or fertilizing; deer do not like them.

Information on ferns was taken from: *Native Ferns, Moss & Grasses* by William Cullina, *A Field Guide to Ferns* by Boughton Cobb, editor (a Peterson field guide), and *Geology of Michigan* by John A. Dorr, Jr. and Donald F. Eschman.

Judy Webber

WAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION AT THE CONFERENCE

The Nominating Committee reports that the following candidates are up for re-election at the annual meeting and have agreed to be nominated for their current positions.

Maryann Whitman

WAM Educational Grant Coordinator

Susan Baldyga-Grubb

Secretary

Jean Weirich

Treasurer

~ CONFERENCE INFORMATION ~

23rd ANNUAL MICHIGAN WILDFLOWER CONFERENCE

Sunday March 7 and Monday March 8, 2010

Growing Communities: Yard by Yard

Keynote Presenter: William Cullina

Previously with the New England Wild Flower Society and now Curator at the Costal Maine Botanical Garden in Boothbay, Maine.

The Michigan Wildflower Conference is open to all who are interested in Michigan native plants and their habitats. This conference offers a variety of topics focusing on the value and use of native plants in a range of sites including lakeshore, home garden, school yard habitat, public gardens, parks and natural areas. The conference will focus on how each of us can become engaged in caring for our own space as well as public spaces to support the life that is dependent on it.

SUNDAY, MARCH 7

7:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Kellogg Center, Big Ten Wing

Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. in the Red Cedar Room

Refreshments provided

GENERAL SESSIONS SUNDAY MORNING: Begins at 8:30 a.m.

William Cullina: 50 Great Native Plants for the Great Lakes Region

You don't need to look too far to find beautiful, functional, enduring plants for our Great Lakes gardens. This region is home to an amazing variety of native plants that bring with them grace, hardiness, and an adaptability to our climate and soils, that is unmatched by most exotics. Bill will profile his favorite native wildflowers, ferns, trees, shrubs, and vines for gardens in the Great Lakes Region.

GLASSEN GRANT AWARDS LUNCHEON

Recipient garden projects will be featured and grants awarded:

Robert Krueger, PhD, Grant Chairman Maryann Whitman, Grant Coordinator

A VARIETY OF AFTERNOON CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Presenters include: Jane Herbert and Bob Grese

WAM ANNUAL MEETING WITH ELECTION OF OFFICERS 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.- Red Cedar Room

MONDAY, MARCH 8

7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Kellogg Center, Big Ten Wing

Registration opens at 7:30 a.m. in the Red Cedar Room

Refreshments provided

A VARIETY OF CONCURRENT MORNING SESSIONS Begins at 8:30 a.m.

Presenters include: Michael Saint, Gary Noble, Vern Stevens, Phyllis Higman and Dr. Dan Moerman

MONDAY KEYNOTE ADDRESS/LUNCHEON

William Cullina: Native Plants in Context: Ecology, Diversity, and Interconnection

No plant is an island; each exists in a context and community of trees and toads, rocks and rotifers, birds and bugs. Like human communities, this network of individual needs is supported by a complex communication and mutualisms between soil, weather, climate and water that we hardly understand. In his address Bill uses the analogy of human communities to explain the importance of relationships in the natural world. He will answer the age old lament "why is gardening such hard work" and will present a more sustainable (not to mention back-friendly) way to garden and thrive on this small planet.

~ CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION ~

AFTERNOON PANEL PRESENTATION

TOPIC: Weed Ordinances and Native Landscapes

OTHER ATTRACTIONS

BOOK SIGNING BY BILL CULLINA

ON BOTH DAYS OF THE CONFERENCE

A variety of vendors will offer high quality arts and crafts, books, photographs and original paintings. Bill Cullina's books and WAM t-shirts will be offered for sale.

A number of organizations will exhibit educational information about native plants and habitats.

For updates on the conference visit our website, www.wildflowersmich.org

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Early-bird registration

Postmarked by: February 5, 2010
WAM and Michigan Garden Club members:
\$55 one day or \$100 both days
Non-members: \$75 one day or \$140 both days

Regular registration

Postmarked by: February 22, 2010
\$65/one day or
\$120/ both days
Non-members \$85/one day or \$160/both days

*Lunch is included in your pre-conference registration.
Lunch menus on both days offer vegetarian options.*

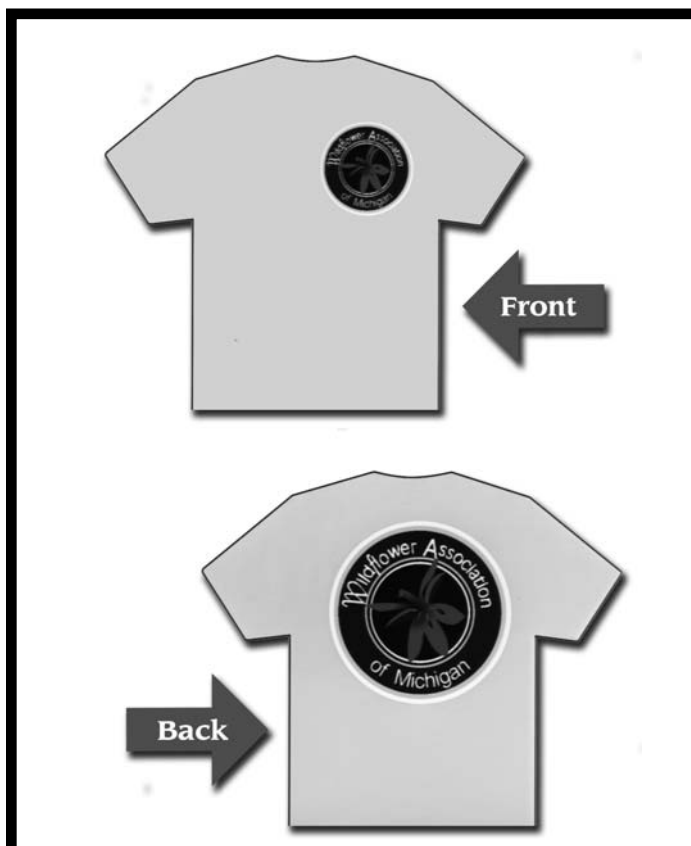
On-site registration fees are per-day: \$70 members and \$90 non-members and **do not include lunch**. Conference materials will be available for late and walk-in registrants while supplies last. If you need confirmation of your reservation, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your registration.

Payment must be sent with registration form to:
Jean Weirich, Registrar,
3947 E. St. Joseph
Grand Ledge, MI 48837

**NO REFUNDS CAN BE MADE AFTER
FEBRUARY 22, 2009**

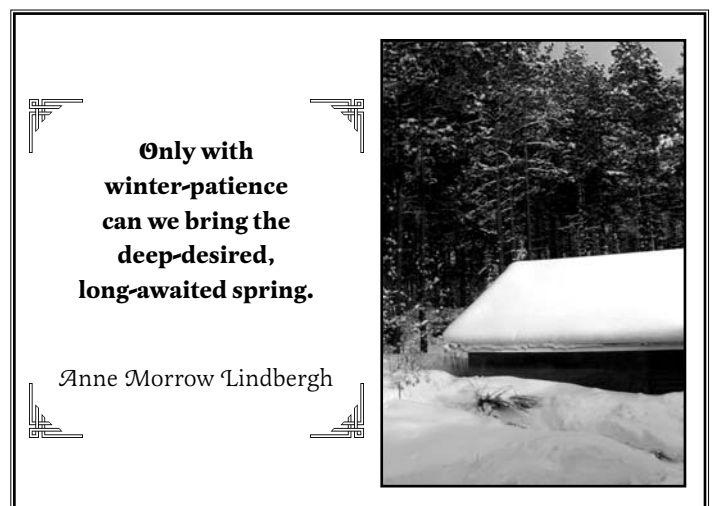
Special Needs – If you have special needs, including dietary, mobility or auditory, please indicate these in detail on your registration form, including the best time for the registrar to contact you to discuss them if necessary.

•••••



Spread the word about native plants by wearing one of our new WAM t-shirts.

You can only get them at the conference. See the registration form for details. Shirts come in green or cream/off white with the WAM logo in color on both front and back.



~ CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM ~

SEND REGISTRATION TO: Jean Weirich, 3947 E. St. Joseph, Grand Ledge, MI 48837

2010 MICHIGAN WILDFLOWER CONFERENCE

NAME (as it should appear on name tag) _____ PHONE (DAY) _____ (EVENING) _____

ORGANIZATION, SCHOOL OR BUSINESS _____ ARE YOU A : VENDOR OR EXHIBITOR

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

E-MAIL _____ FAX _____

NOTE: FOR THIS CONFERENCE ONLY, MICHIGAN GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS QUALIFY FOR THE WAM MEMBER RATES.

I am a member of Michigan Garden Clubs and will register at the WAM Member rate.

Check registration category and boxes below:	MEMBER RATES	NONMEMBER RATES	AMOUNT DUE
Early-Bird Special—DEADLINE IS 2-05-10			
Sunday Only	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75.00	
Monday Only	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75.00	
Sunday and Monday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$140.00	
Regular Registration—DEADLINE IS 2-22-10			
Sunday Only	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$85.00	
Monday Only	<input type="checkbox"/> \$65.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$85.00	
Sunday and Monday	<input type="checkbox"/> \$120.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$160.00	
Lunch is included in the registration fee. Check this box for a Vegetarian lunch: <input type="checkbox"/>			
I am joining WAM to take advantage of the member rate. <input type="checkbox"/>			
WAM Membership <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Renew <input type="checkbox"/> Household \$15 <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Organization \$60			
Donation to WAM (tax deductible)			
I can receive the WAM Newsletter online rather than by US Mail: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
WAM Logo T-shirts are being offered at this year's conference for \$15 each if pre-ordered and \$16 at the conference. Pre-ordered shirts will be distributed during conference registration. Please select the color(s) below and write the quantity next to the desired size(s).			
<input type="checkbox"/> Green small ___ medium ___ large ___ extra-large ___			
<input type="checkbox"/> Cream small ___ medium ___ large ___ extra-large ___			
PAYMENT METHOD—Please make checks and P.O.s payable to WAM Please note: No Refunds After 2-22-10			
<input type="checkbox"/> Check Enclosed <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase Order Attached # _____			for TOTAL of \$
<input type="checkbox"/> I will need a receipt <input type="checkbox"/> For confirmation, include a self-addressed stamped envelope			

Mail check or purchase order with registration form to: 2010 WAM Conference, c/o Jean Weirich, Registrar, 3947 E. St. Joe, Grand Ledge MI 48837. Questions or specific needs? Contact Jean by e-mail: jeanweirich@gmail.com or phone 517.627.7927.

c/o Jean Weirich, Treasurer • 3947 E. St. Joseph • Grand Ledge, MI 48837

Winter 2009 • Volume 14, Number 4

Your WAM membership expires on the date above your name. This is the only notice you will receive. IF IT IS TIME, PLEASE RENEW.

Wildflower Association of Michigan
A nonprofit organization founded in 1986, Lansing, MI

Membership Form *New* *Renew*

Category: Household \$ 15.00
 Business or Organization 60.00
 Life Member (household) 400.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

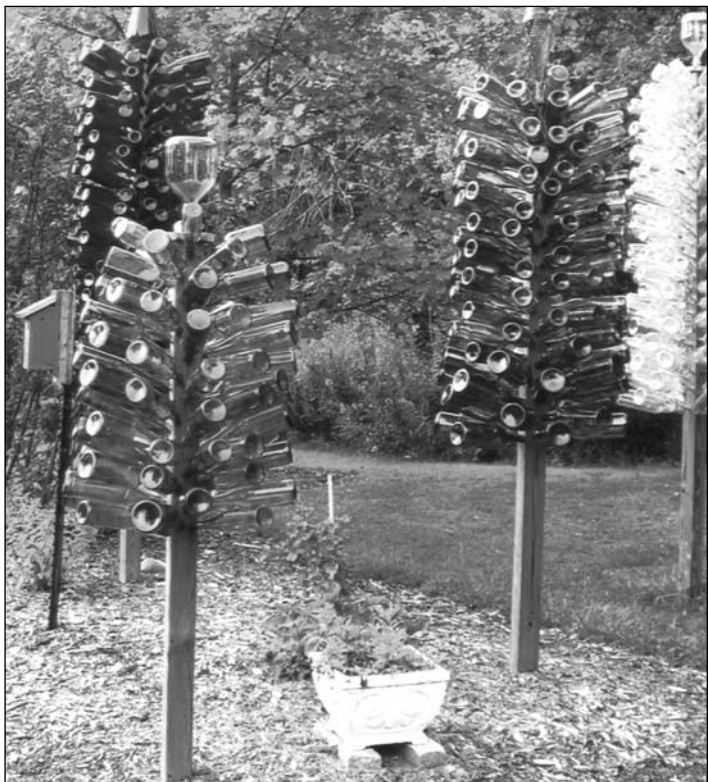
E-mail _____

Phone (day) _____ (eve) _____

Would you prefer to receive the newsletter by email?
 Yes No

*Please make check or money order payable to WAM
 And mail with this form to:*

Wildflower Association of Michigan
 c/o Jean Weirich, Treasurer
 3947 E. St. Joseph • Grand Ledge, MI 48837
 jeanweirich@gmail.com



Bottle trees: No trimming, no spraying, no need to water, year 'round color!

Photo courtesy Carole Reynaert