



Photo: Catherine McKenzie

Annual Member Meeting

Welcome – Annual Member Meeting

- Introduce yourself in the chat with your name, state, and chapter
- Use the chat for questions!
- The meeting recording and annual report will be available in the coming weeks
- Experiencing technical difficulties?
Email support@wildones.org





Jen Ainsworth

Executive Director (WI)

2020



Photo: David Silsbee

Wild Ones Annual Member Meeting

Tonight's Agenda

- Welcome - Mission, Vision, Values
- Chapter & Member Community
- Mission Stories
- Financial Position
- Strategic Goals & Key Initiatives
- Volunteer Acknowledgement
- Presentation of National BOD & Staff
- Closing Message
- Recognition of Supporters



Photo: Charlene Noll



Photo: Patrick Higgins



Hilary Robertson Collado

President (MD)

Wild Ones Mission

Wild Ones promotes native landscapes through **education, advocacy** and **collaborative** action

- A movement of people growing healthier landscapes
- Mentors guiding native planters
- Partners in environmental progress

Native plants and natural landscapes thriving in every community



Core Values

The background features a detailed white line-art illustration of a natural scene. It includes a large sunflower-like flower at the top center, a dragonfly to its right, a butterfly on the left, and a bird perched on a plant stem in the bottom right corner. The overall style is clean and minimalist.

Respect is at the heart of Wild Ones. We have respect for each other, for nature and for the earth

We're an **inclusive** community. Diverse voices and backgrounds make us stronger- that's why we welcome everyone to join us

We provide **evidence-based information**, because the seeds of change spread most efficiently when grounded in data. We monitor and share the latest evidence-informed strategies

We're **action and growth oriented**. Just dig in! We learn, grow, and share our knowledge



Debbie Nowak
Chapter Liaison (WI)



Photo: Miriam Dobrofsky



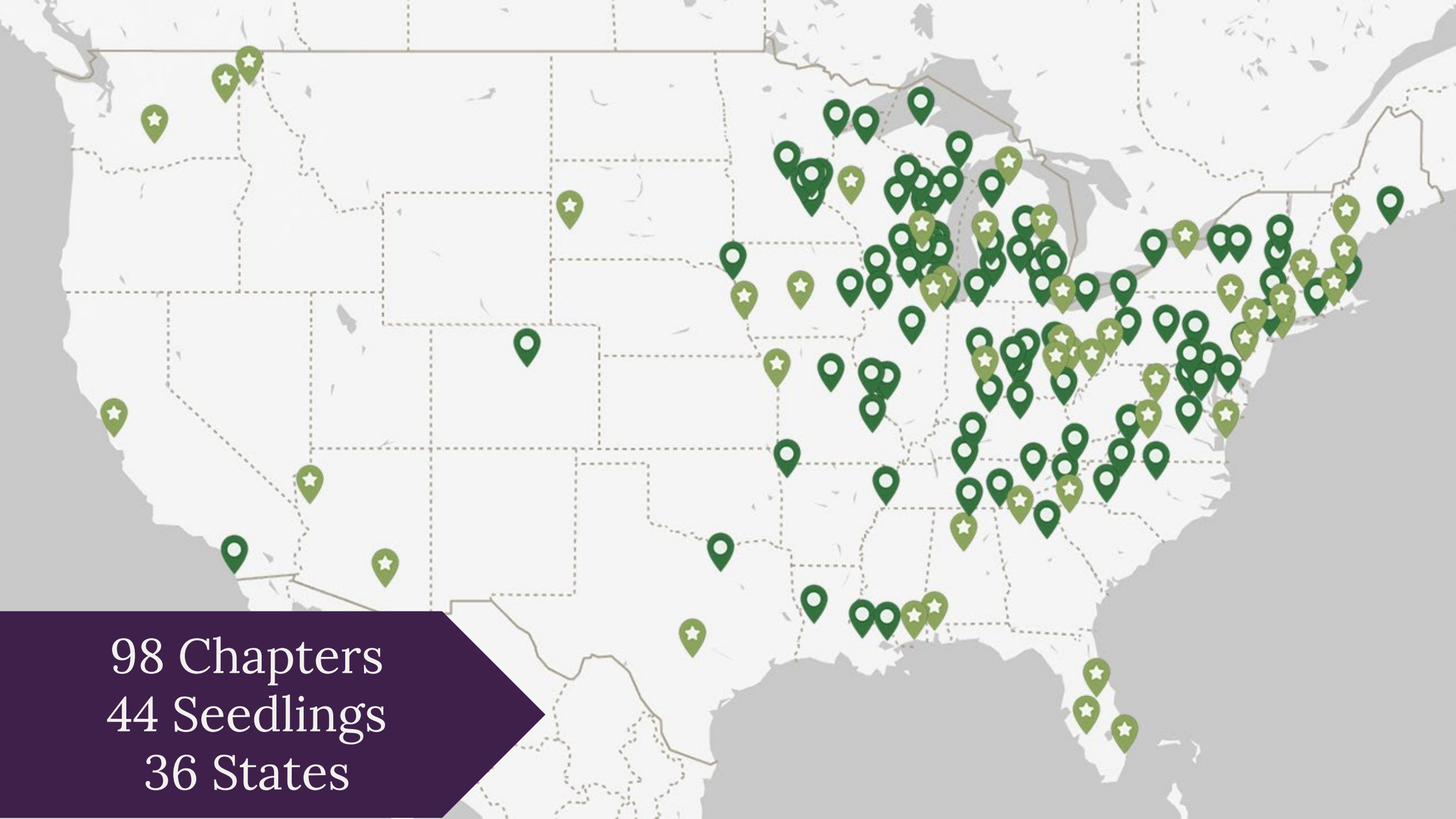
A growing network, rooted in place

**A movement of people growing
healthier landscapes.**

Community Growth

- Wild Ones Membership base **increased** from 12,043 members in December 2024 to 13,415 in December 2025, a 13% increase
- 4,476 members are **new** to Wild Ones, 416 added by Seedling Chapters
- **States** with the **most growth** include Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Minnesota
- **Chapters** with the **most growth** are Front Range (CO), St. Louis (MO), Tennessee Valley, West Cook (IL), and Fox Valley Area (WI)





98 Chapters
44 Seedlings
36 States

Seedlings

- Appalachian Foothills (OH)
- Central Iowa (2026)
- Central Florida
- Eastern Shore of Virginia
- First Mountain (GA)
- Greater Lynchburg Area (VA)
- Kansas City (MO)
- Marsh Area (WI)
- Ohio Islands to Inland (2026)
- ROC City Beechwood Roots (NY) (2026)
- South Central Texas
- South Peninsula (CA)
- Southeast Florida
- Will County (IL) (2026)
- Woodlawn Southside Chicago (IL)



Start a Chapter



wildones.org/chapters/start/

- Chapters form in a variety of ways, what they have in common is people like you who are passionate about the environment!
- Wild Ones provides support, guidance and information.

Chartered Chapters

- Cedar Rapids Iowa City
- Delmarva (MD) (2026)
- DFW (TX)
- Greater Frederick Maryland
- Roanoke Region (VA)
- Southern Adirondacks (NY)



Chapter Transitions

Profile Changes

- **Ann Arbor Area (MI)** - Name Change
(formerly Ann Arbor)
- **Erie Drift Plains (Meadville, PA)** - Name & Homebase Change
(formerly Youngstown Area, OH)
- **Southern Adirondacks (NY)** - Name Change
(formerly Warren & Washington NY)
- **West Michigan Shore-to-Prairie (Seedling) (MI)** - Name Change
(formerly Newaygo Region)





Sara Rassing

Education & Program Coordinator (IL)



Photo: Sara Rassing



Promotes native landscapes through:

Education



Photo: Seeds for Education

Advocacy



Photo: Wild Ones Archive

Collaborative Action



Photo: River-City-Chapter



Photo: Jill Trochlell-Ziehr

Education

- *Wild Ones Journal* Volume 38 was published **with 47 original educational articles**
- Published new **native garden designs**
- Hosted **9 free educational** webinars
- Wild Ones **YouTube channel**, saw 100% growth over 2024 with nearly **130K views**. We added over 4,000 subscribers in 2025



National Webinars



40,000+
PEOPLE REGISTERED

59%
NEW VIEWERS

> 1M
REACH ON SOCIALS



A field of purple flowers, likely asters, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The text is centered over the image.

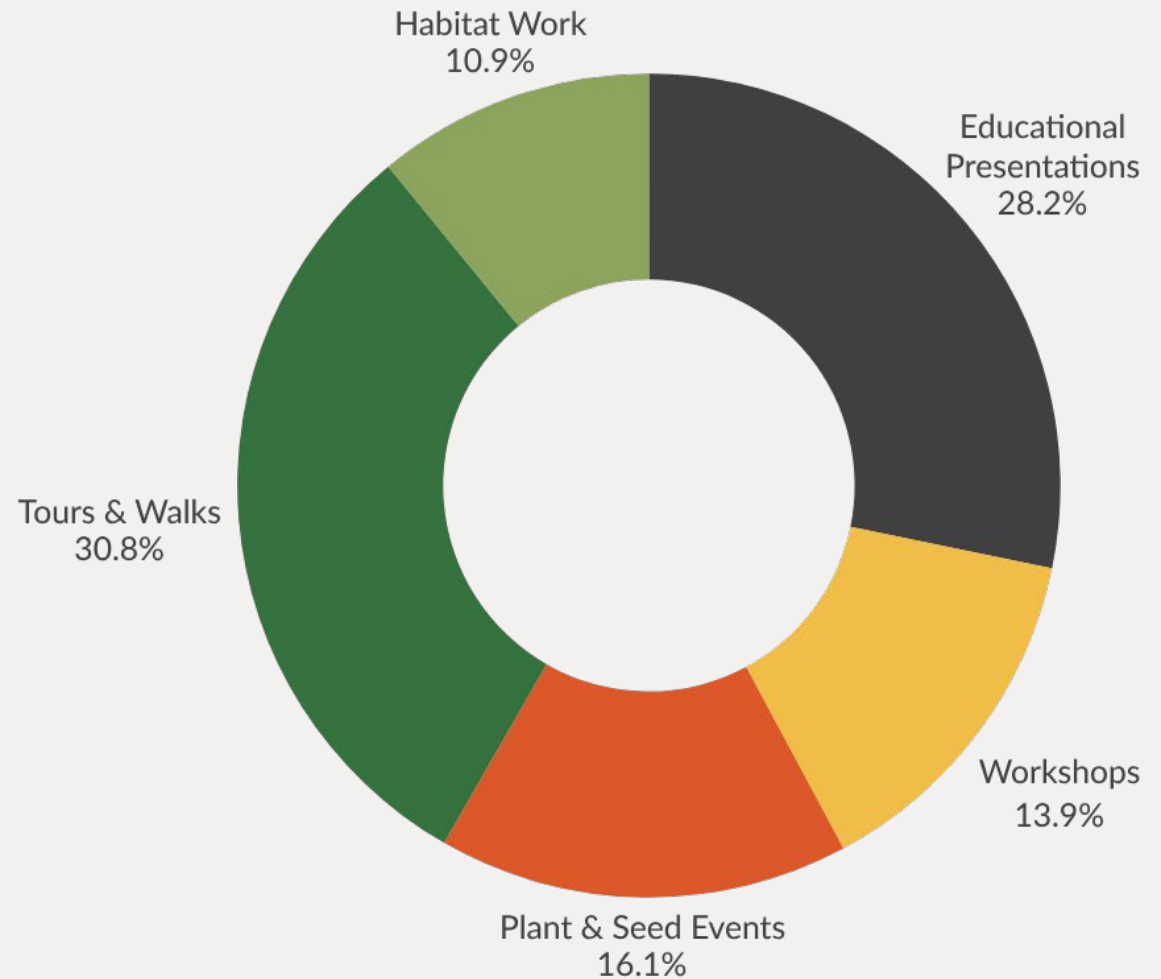
From knowledge to action

**We improve the environment
through local chapters and
hands-on education.**



Education

Chapters lead **2,367 programs** and activities in 2025.



Chapter Events

Conferences · Symposia · Public Events

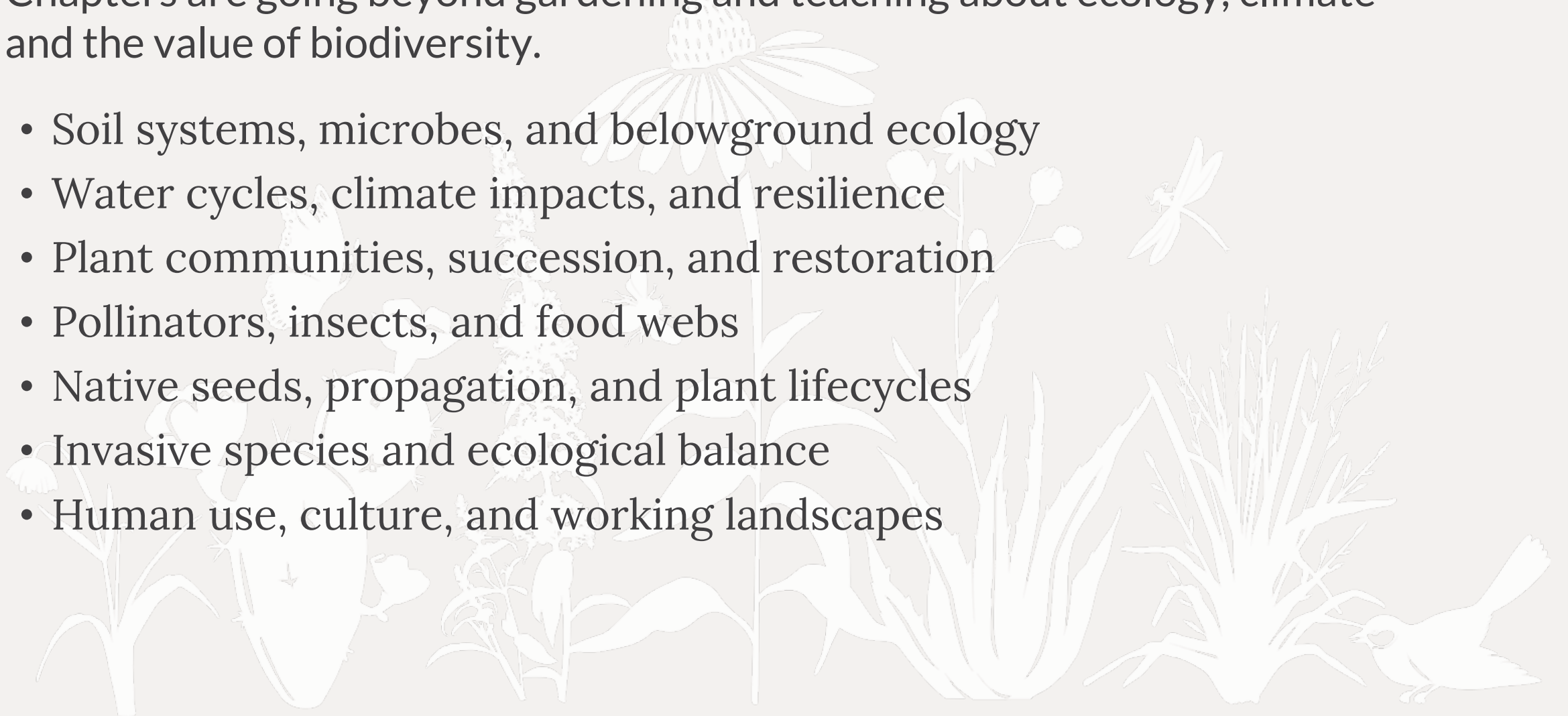
- Large-scale learning, led locally
- 7+ chapter-led conferences and symposia to **over 1,500 attendees**
- Keynotes, local experts, and community partners
- Topics span ecology, pollinators, policy, and more



Science & Ecology Education

Chapters are going beyond gardening and teaching about ecology, climate and the value of biodiversity.

- Soil systems, microbes, and belowground ecology
- Water cycles, climate impacts, and resilience
- Plant communities, succession, and restoration
- Pollinators, insects, and food webs
- Native seeds, propagation, and plant lifecycles
- Invasive species and ecological balance
- Human use, culture, and working landscapes



From Seed to Habitat



Collection



Cleaning & Storage



Propagation



Planting/Installation



Community Distribution

A field of purple flowers, likely asters, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The text is centered on the image.

Hundreds of chapters with one shared mission

**Wild Ones advocates for native
landscapes through education and
community action.**

Advocacy

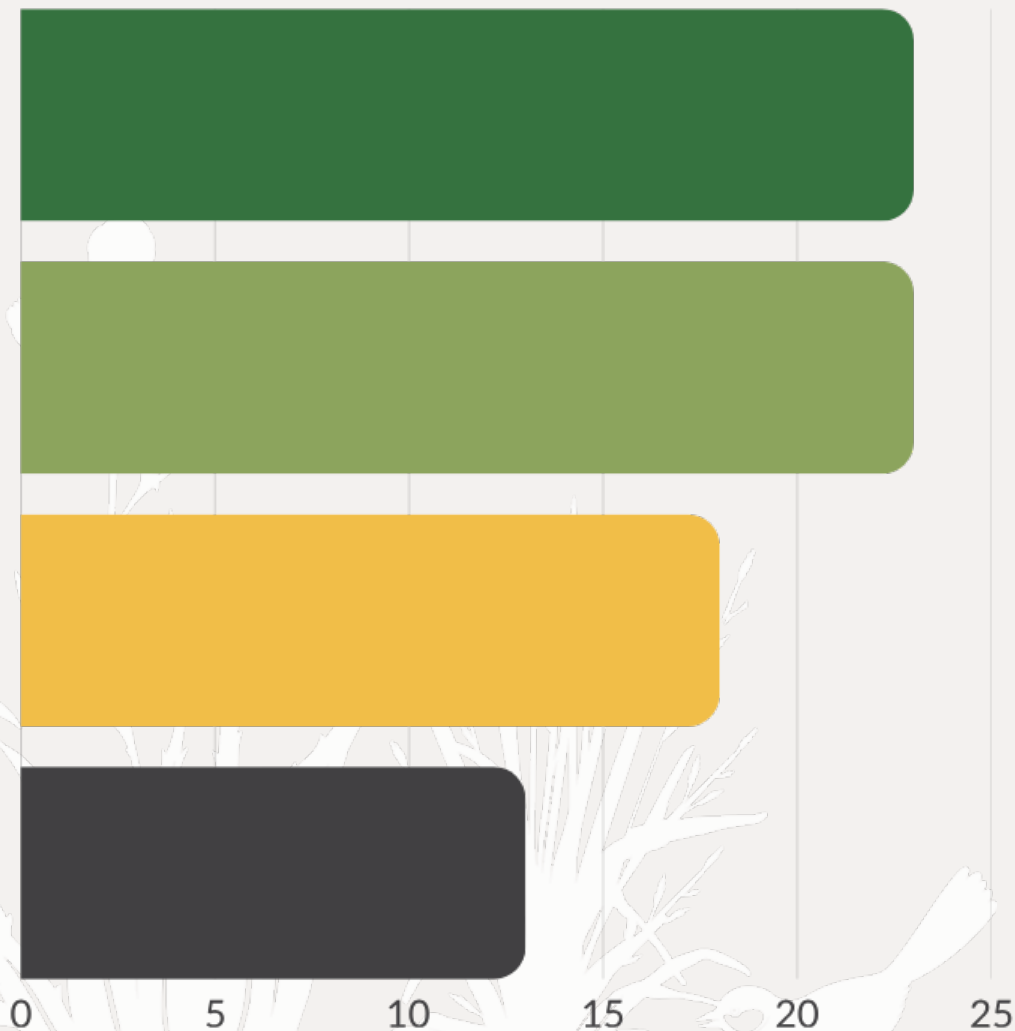
- 53% of chapters undertook advocacy efforts in 2025
- 42% attempted to influence public policies
- Chapters were working on nearly 60 policies
- **15 chapters successfully influenced** public policies

Organized Action

Partnered for Action

Spoke up at Meetings

Met Decision Makers



Grassroots Change

2025 Chapter Policy Work

- Native landscaping ordinances and HOA protections
- Invasive species regulation and plant sale restrictions
- Pollinator and pesticide
- Land use and habitat protection decisions
- Tree, stormwater, and biodiversity planning policies
- Community designations and awareness campaigns (e.g., Native Plant Month)





*“What we experienced...
showed that a small
group of people can make
a huge difference.”*

*- Charlotte Piedmont (NC) Chapter
President, Linda Nelson*



Josh Nelson
Development Director (IL)



Photo: Josh Nelson

A field of purple flowers, likely asters, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The text is centered on the image.

We don't do this alone

Wild Ones is a knowledgeable, hands-on, and supportive community.

*"I couldn't ask to be among friendlier,
more helpful and nicer people!"*

*-Louisville (KY) Chapter
President, Margaret Carreiro*



*"Seeing people move from curiosity to confidence...
when native plants become something they can
apply in their own yards, communities, and
advocacy work, the impact becomes tangible."*

*-Greater Cleveland (OH) Chapter
President, Jessica Ausnehmer*

Volunteer Engagement

People are showing up:

- Over **91K participants** in 2025

Volunteers are doing the work:

- Nearly **400 outreach events**
- Generated **~120,000 public engagements**

Thousands of people are contributing time directly to native plant work.

- Total hours spent planning events:
31,850
- **Event Volunteers: 8,453**



Photo: Wild Ones Staff

Community Science

- **24 chapters actively contributed to science, data, and understanding ecosystems through research or community science**
- Including iNaturalist, Pollinator Census, Frog Monitoring, and Monarch work



Photo: Jonathan Rossow

A field of purple flowers, likely asters, with a dark, semi-transparent overlay. The text is centered on the image.

Partners in environmental progress

**Diverse voices and backgrounds
make us stronger.**



Collaboration

- **Collaborated** with nearly **1,000 mission-aligned organizations** to strengthen the native plant movement
- Forged **253 new connections** with **conservation, cultural and humanitarian organizations**

National Collaborations

Wild Ones works with organizations and businesses that support the native landscaping movement to offer mutual advocacy and mission support



Protect their lives. Preserve ours.



Learn more about our Partners and Sponsors: <https://wildones.org/partners-sponsors/>



Lisa Olsen
Chapter Liaison (CO)



Photo: Lisa Olsen

A dense field of purple aster flowers with yellow centers, filling the entire frame. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, and the background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Change you can see

**Native plants and natural landscapes
thriving in every community.**



Native Plant & Seed Shares

- **148,000+ native plants** distributed through chapter sales and shares
- 37 chapters supported **seed libraries or seed banks** with native plant seeds and consultation

Central Wisconsin Chapter President Elizabeth Whelan:

“We started over 5,000 native plants this year and to know that they are in the community adding to the diversity of native plants just gives me the biggest smile.”

Seeds for Education

- Nearly **\$10,000 awarded** to youth-centered native garden projects in 2025
- **20 SFE projects in 14 states**, supported by volunteers and chapters
- A **100% donor-funded** program connecting young people to native plants



wildones.org/seeds-for-education/



Photo: Wynn Center, 2025 SFE Grant Recipient

Certified Native Habitat Program

- Transforming home and public landscapes into visible, connected habitat
- Celebrating stewardship that supports wildlife and biodiversity
- **Habitat certification open to Wild Ones members**



wildones.org/cnhp/





Before & After

Teddi Zonker's certified native habitat in April 2012 and July 2025

8,300+ sq. ft.
Watauga, Texas

Small Yard, Big Impact

- Community science documenting ecological change
- 398 species recorded on 1/10 acre using iNaturalist
- Evidence shared through public talks and outreach
- Small urban gardens sustaining complex food webs



Public Projects, Collective Impact

- **357 public habitat projects** supported nationwide
- Nearly **13,000 native plants** installed
- **1+ million sq. ft** restored or converted from turf
- Native landscapes created through collaboration serving people, place, and wildlife



A small brown bird with a reddish-brown head and back is perched on a thin branch of a sunflower plant. The bird is facing left. The background is filled with green leaves and several sunflower heads, some of which are still in their green, unopened stages. The lighting is bright and natural, suggesting an outdoor setting.

What do you find most fulfilling as a chapter leader?

“Seeing my co-leaders rally to bring together volunteers from our chapter and the community to complete a massive public garden installation.”

*- Chequamegon Bay (WI) Chapter
President, Marisa Lee*

Sustained Stewardship

- Removal of ecologically disruptive introduced species releases dormant native seeds and plants
- Volunteer stewardship evolving into partnership when ecological needs exceed capacity
- Restoring ecological potential in exquisite remnants of native habitat

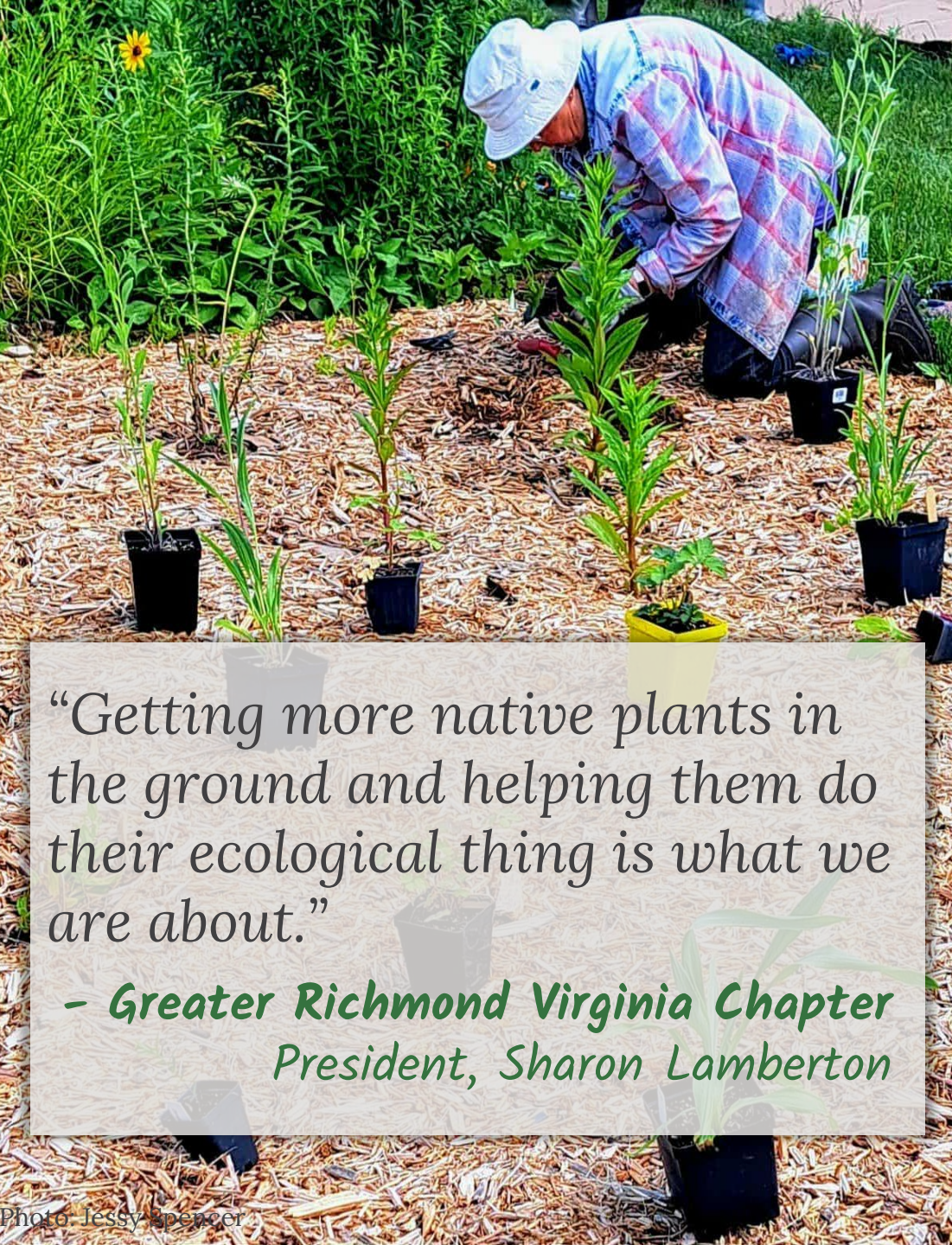


Community-Wide Momentum

- Chapter engagement contributing to city-wide nature initiatives
- Community partnerships supporting shared environmental goals
- Native landscapes integrated into civic identity and planning



CHATTANOOGA
NATIONAL
PARK CITY*



Just Dig In

- Learn by doing—one plant at a time
- Home, school, and youth gardens empowering the next generation of stewards
- Public projects and natural area restoration shaped by collaboration
- Community-wide engagement that builds lasting support for native landscapes

“Getting more native plants in the ground and helping them do their ecological thing is what we are about.”

*- Greater Richmond Virginia Chapter
President, Sharon Lamberton*



Deanna Sharp
Marketing Coordinator (WI)



Photo: Deanna Sharp



The voice of the natural landscaping movement

**Connecting people and native plants
for a healthy planet.**



History

- Began in 1977, inspired by a Lorrie Otto natural landscaping workshop
- First chapter formed in 1979, grounded in education and advocacy
- Early programs: seed exchanges, plant rescues, and public education
- Built through local leadership and community-driven change

2025 Anniversaries

Madison (WI) Chapter - 30 Years

Arrowhead (MN) Chapter - 25 Years

Central Wisconsin Chapter - 25 Years

Gibson Woods (IN) Chapter - 25 Years

Mid-Missouri Chapter - 25 Years

Illinois Prairie Chapter - 15 Years

North Oakland (MI) Chapter - 15 Years

Big River Big Woods (MN) Chapter - 10 Years

Smoky Mountains (TN) Chapter - 10 Years

Ozark (AR) Chapter - 5 Years

Southern Kentucky Chapter - 5 Years



Expanding Reach. Growing the Movement

50K

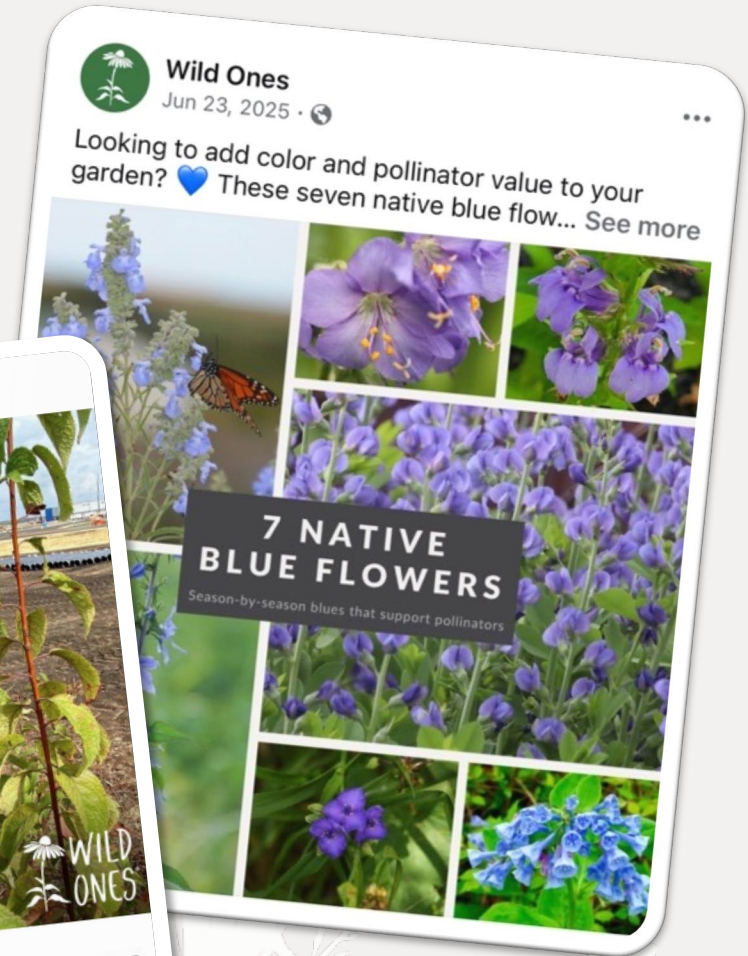
SOCIAL FOLLOWERS

100K+

EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

>5M

REACH ON SOCIALS



Media Highlights

Local media coverage grew nearly 30% year over year, highlighting 40 Wild Ones chapters nationwide.

Chapter impact included:

- Broader chapter participation – with newer chapters building local visibility
- Sustained, community-based storytelling that builds trust
- Coverage tied to advocacy, education, habitat stewardship, and public events



Photo: Cathy Streett Bold

Chapter Recognition

Community leadership earns external validation from partners and institutions:

- **Tennessee Valley Chapter** received sustained foundation support for free, volunteer-led public education.
- **San Diego (CA) Chapter** was awarded an ASLA San Diego Community Grant for a native landscape installation.
- **Front Range (CO) Chapter** was recognized by Lakewood Parks for collaborative land stewardship.



Member Recognition

- **June Keibler — Greater Kane County (IL) Chapter:** Community Leadership Recognition (Forest Preserve District of Kane County)
- **Linda Bennett & Ann Blanchfield — Southeast Missouri Chapter:** Environmentalists of the Year (East Ozarks Audubon Society)
- **Patricia K. Armstrong — Greater DuPage (IL) Chapter:** George B. Rabb Force of Nature Award (Chicago Wilderness Alliance)
- **Vicki Bonk, Julia Vanatta & Holley Wlodarczyk — Twin Cities (MN) Chapter:** Good Ancestor Award (Elders Climate Action)
- **Kathleen Hallett — Fox Valley Area (WI) Chapter:** Volunteer of the Year (Wild Ones Fox Valley Area)
- **Amy Thomas & Jonathan Cohen — Midcoast Maine Chapter:** Green Home & Design Award (Green & Healthy Maine Homes)
- **Esther Bonney — Chesapeake Bay (MD) Chapter:** Youth in Action Award (4-H National)

Honorary Directors



Neil Diboll
Lifetime
Honorary Director



Doug Tallamy
Lifetime
Honorary Director



**Robin Wall
Kimmerer**
2026-2029
Honorary Director



Esther Bonney
2026-2029
Honorary Director



Nancy Lawson
2026-2029
Honorary Director

Honorary Director

Recognition of Service

Thank you!

Larry Weaner

Term: 2022-2025





Jen Ainsworth
Executive Director (WI)



Photo: Stella Sellner

Supporting Our Work

- **Wild Ones is a community of native planters** connecting people to native plants!
- **National supports the network** with coordination, resources, education and infrastructure
- **Chapters bring the mission to life** through education, outreach and hands on community action



Photo: Morgana Eckman

Grassroots Volunteers

- Last year **935 individuals volunteered in leadership roles** across **142 chapters**
- Additionally, **4,339 volunteers** stepped up to support chapter initiatives



Photo: Maria Otto

National Staff Team



Jen Ainsworth
Executive Director
(WI) - 2020



Catherine Daley
Administrative
Assistant (LTE)
(WI) - 2026



Josh Nelson
Development Director
(IL) - 2023



Matt Nett
Administrative
Assistant (LTE)
(WI) - 2026



Debbie Nowak
Chapter Liaison
(WI) - 2024



Lisa Olsen
Chapter Liaison
(CO) - 2021



Sara Rassing
Education & Program Coordinator
(IL) - 2023



Deanna Sharp
Marketing Coordinator
(WI) - 2023

2026 Board Officers



**Hilary Robertson
Collado**
President
2025 -2027
Nation's Capital Region
(MD)
Chapter

Tracey Koenig
Vice President
2025-2027
Fox Valley Area (WI)
Chapter

Kristine Faxon
Treasurer
2026-2029
Front Range (CO)
Chapter

Jeremy Rappaport
Secretary
2024-2026
Milwaukee-North (WI)
Chapter

Loris Damerow
Past President
2020-2027
Ann Arbor Area (MI)
Chapter

Board Directors



Stan Anton
2025-2027

Southeastern Pennsylvania
(PA) Chapter



Devin Colbert
2026-2029

Greater Baltimore (MD) Chapter



Meg Delaney
2023-2027

Ann Arbor Area (MI)
Chapter



Ken Foster
2022-2026

Mid-Hudson Valley
(NY) Chapter



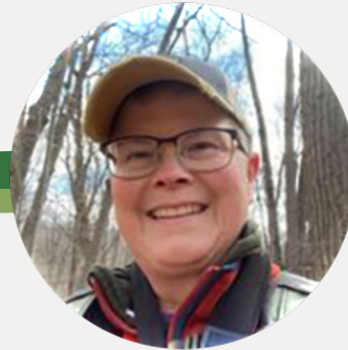
Amanda Glassco
2025-2027

Greater Baltimore (MD) Chapter



Holly Latteman
2021-2027

Columbus (OH) Chapter



Carolyn Miller
2023-2026

Red Cedar (MI) Chapter



David Palmer
2024-2027

Greater Indianapolis (IN)
Chapter

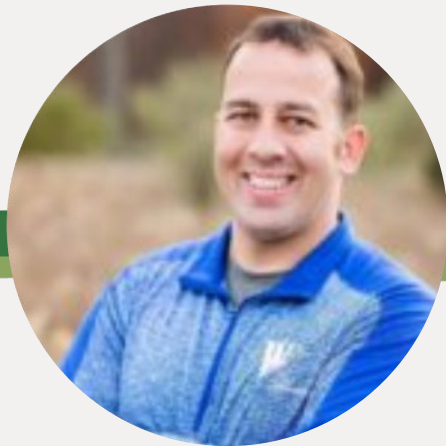


Ahdra Young
2026-2029

Columbus (OH) Chapter

Board Directors

Recognition of Service



Peter Dargatz
2025-2027
Menomonee River Area
(WI) Chapter



Hunter Sagely
Treasurer
2025-2027
Ozark (MO) Chapter

Financial Position

- **GAAP Standards:** Our financials follow GAAP, the standard nonprofit accounting rules that ensure accuracy and consistency
- **Audit Oversight:** The audit reviews both the numbers and the systems behind them to confirm strong financial controls
- **Transparency & Trust:** These practices help ensure clear, reliable financial reporting for members, donors, and supporters



Strategic Goals

Goal #1:

Strengthen Organizational Financial Sustainability

Goal #2:

Expand National Presence through Chapter & Member Support and Engagement

Goal #3:

Nationalize Educational and Advocacy Efforts



Strategic Progress

- **Strengthened Financial Oversight & Reporting:**
Improved audit reporting of chapter financial reports and SOCR reporting to increase consistency, transparency, and oversight
- **Enhanced Governance & Leadership Development:**
Implemented a structured onboarding process for National Directors and improved the director recruitment process.
- **Improved Measurement & Decision-Making:** Developed mission-impact criteria and dashboards to better measure program effectiveness and outcomes
- **Building Capacity & Community for Sustainable Growth:** Reviewed staffing structure and capacity needs, increased opportunities for chapter-to-chapter networking, and enhanced the Honorary Director Program.





Photo: Catherine McKenzie



Hilary Roberston Colado

President (MA)
2024

“We can't do this work without joy. We can't do this work without a sense of creativity, curiosity, and solidarity.

Movements fizzle when they're not fun.

The people who have the most fun win, because where do you want to go? Where there's laughter, where there's singing, where **there's people who feel like we are in this together.”**

-Robin Wall Kimmerer

Connect with us



@wildonesnativeplants

Email: support@wildones.org

Chapter contact info can be found at:
<https://wildones.org/chapters/>



donate.wildones.org



Thank you



Thank
you

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North American Land Trust

Ohio Native Habitat Nursery

OPN Seed

Possibility Place Nursery

Prairie Nursery

Red Stem Native Landscapes

Remembrance Forest

Shooting Star Native Seeds

Thomas Nursery

Thank
you

Quarterly Journal

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Jared Rosenbaum

Sima Shah

Mackenzie Seymour

Marlene Smith

Avi Stopper

Katie Surma

Adam Varenhorst

Justin Wheeler

Janet Whitworth

Thank
you

Seeds For Education

Judges:

Jone Arsenault

Gina Bartleson

Carrie Bowdle

James Cieslak

Margaret Cotton

Karen Crawford

Sandra A Eisele

Sheri Glowinski

Kathryn Gottwald

Felice Hancock

Tracey Koenig

Heather Laidlaw

Caroline Miller

Nick Padilla

Danielle Reist

Emma Slivka

Karin Rindal

Thank
you

Native Garden Designers



Pete Corbino
Richmond, VA



Katrina Kelly
Lexington, KY



Kate Brittenham
Albany, NY



Jeanine Sharkey
San Diego, CA



Thank
you

Webinars

Speakers and Hosts:

McKenna Allen

Kelly Capuzzi

Loris Damerow

Sam Droege

Kim Eierman

Heather Evans

Zoe Evans

Chelsea Gastelum

Joanna Hall

Dave Hunter

Nicole Machuca

Rosemary Mix

Lora Morandin

Lisa Olsen

Marlene Smith

Doug Tallamy

Larry Weaner

Thank
you

Photo Contest Judges

Jill Easton

Sandi Ford

Nancy House

Holly Latteman

Susane Nelson

Suzanne Langley

Vicky Redlin

Bruce Senior -



Thank
you

Chapter Advisory Committee

Kimberly Haag – Greater Kane County (IL) Chapter

Rosemary Mix – Capital Region NY Chapter

Kristine Bradof – Keweenaw (MI) Chapter

Ann Schreifels – Illinois Prairie Chapter

Regina Santore – Smoky Mountains (TN) Chapter

Laura Yates – St. Louis (MO) Chapter

Kristina Shaneyfelt – Tennessee Valley (TN) Chapter

Danielle Reist – South Bend (IN) Chapter

Marlene Smith – Chesapeake Bay (MD) Chapter

Kathleen Besser – Front Range (CO) Chapter

Thank you



Photo: Cary Smith