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INSIDE: Right Native Plant, Right Place | Wild Ones Habitat Gardening | Pond-erring Native

SPRING 2017 ISSUE

# GroScapes

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*Landmasters and our retail store, The Pond & Rock Shop – serve all of Syracuse and Central New York from our store and offices in Cicero, NY.*

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\*\* (Re-labeled D-Solv)\*\*

## RIGHT NATIVE PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

By Gail Maddox

When gardening at home, our goal was to leave as little of a footprint on the environment as possible. With every decision we made, we thought we were doing our best to preserve the earth. We thought we were installing the right plants to create the optimal environment for birds, insects, bats and other animals to thrive.

It was not until the last couple of years did we realize that we were not doing enough. My view toward our landscape practices changed after listening to podcasts and reading the book "Bringing Nature Home" by Doug Tallamy, PHD Entomology, University of Delaware. Since then I've become passionate about native plants. I did not know that all plants, trees and shrubs were not created equal. I chose them for what I thought were the right reasons - beneficial to pollinators and birds, drought and pest resistant, and their beauty in my landscape.

We were very successful with drawing several birds including Scarlet Tanagers, Indigo Buntings, Woodpeckers, Chickadees, and many more. Little did we know that it was the natural environment we inhabited that played the key role in this process. By preserving the Oak, Hickory, Cherry and other native trees and shrubs we were doing it half right. These natives hosted many caterpillars and insects which helped feed our birds.

After understanding the reasons behind the dwindling population of monarch butterflies, bees, fire-flies, and birds, did I discover my practices were part of the problem. We need to do our part per-sonally and as a company to increase bio-diversity in the landscape. You can make a difference by planting one native plant at a time. To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow and to plant a **Native Plant** is to save tomorrow!

Visit us online at [www.landmasters.net](http://www.landmasters.net) to read the rest of Gail's article on Native Plants.



**Read More Here!**

Doug Tallamy's  
The Living Landscape and  
[BringingNatureHome.net](http://BringingNatureHome.net)

**We offer Pond Openings, Service and Maintenance for Natural & Lined Ponds** ...in the Syracuse area Landmasters can do it for you! Call 315.452.1908 press 1 to have your pond opened or serviced. We will test your water, clean your pond of any debris, jumpstart the good bacteria, install your pump and start your filter. **Call us today so you will be at the top of our list!**

**"If you think it's expensive to hire a professional to do the job, wait until you hire an amateur."**



## DISCOVER HABITAT GARDENING IN CNY

By Janet Allen

"A garden club with a difference" is how the "Habitat Garden Club" described itself when it started more than fifteen years ago. The difference? A focus on our gardens providing food, water, cover, and a place to raise young for birds, butterflies, and pollinators rather than creating just ornamental gardens.

But a few years after we started, we discovered the national not-for-profit organization Wild Ones, whose mission is to preserve biodiversity by planting native plants. We decided to become a local chapter of that organization and changed our name to the "Habitat Gardening in Central New York Chapter of Wild Ones." Yes, it's quite a mouthful even when we shorten it to simply "Habitat Gardening in CNY"!

Why do we emphasize planting native plants? At first, we relied on the experiences of people such as Lorrie Otto, founder of Wild Ones, and Sara Stein, author of the classic book Noah's Garden. Stein discovered that birds and other beneficial creatures disappeared from her yard after she had created a conventional ornamental landscape, but that they began to return when she recreated the native plant communities.

But as compelling as the experiences of these pioneers were, now scientists, such as Doug Tallamy, author of Bringing Nature Home and The Living Landscape, have confirmed the experiences of these pioneers and other wildlife gardeners. Wildlife depends on a healthy food web, and the foundation of a healthy food web is indeed native plants. And it's not just wildlife. Humans depend on a healthy food web, too, as well as on all the other benefits of a healthy environment.

As an educational not-for-profit organization, HGCNY offers many resources, activities, and events. Although most of what we offer is available at no charge, we encourage people to become official

members by becoming a member of Wild Ones. And all Wild Ones members receive the bimonthly Wild Ones Journal, and by being a member, you support the Wild Ones mission of preserving biodiversity.

We invite you to take advantage of the following HGCNY resources and activities. To learn more about Wild Ones, visit the website at [wildones.org](http://wildones.org).



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## POND-ERING "NATIVE"

By Kim Maddox

I find myself often pondering "native" in the artificial ecosystems we create when installing a lined pond. Not easy to do to say the least!

- Line soil with a liner to retain water
- Recirculate with a pump that runs on electricity
- Stock the pond with Japanese Koi
- Introduce tropical and some native plants

So, what's native about all this? Well, it's been suggested by those much smarter than I, that the longer plants and Koi have been here, they will develop to the point that they also have natural predators. I guess this could designate them with "native" status as they do support parasites and insects as a food source. Koi have parasites, bacteria and even fungus that can harm and even kill them. Without a balanced environment and preventative treatments Koi can suffer.

Our ponds provide a source for water and bathing for our local native bird populations. These same birds eat insects and caterpillars that are found on native plants nearby. By supporting fish and aquatic life, we also support predatory bird populations, mink, fishers and weasels. The plant species we introduce into our ponds have also developed natural enemies such as aphids and mites.

So I guess at the end of the day we can resign ourselves to the fact that we've created artificial environments that have supported native plants, fish, birds and small mammals. Most importantly we are creating environments for insects, frogs, toads, birds, etc., to be recognized as a natural habitat water is an essential component! We are also conscious that the additives that we use in our artificial ecosystems revolve around natural bacteria that help to maintain optimal water quality for all living things. The use of bogs for filtration are often used to grow the essential bacteria that helps to maintain the critical balance for the proliferation of wildlife as well. Consequently, I do believe that the water features we create, are helping to manifest a native environment!