



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2025

MILWAUKEE SOUTHWEST/WEHR CHAPTER OF WILD ONES

November 8 - Wehr Nature Center

Gathering/socializing starts at 1:15 and the meeting starts at 1:30.

Composting

Presented by Chris Chitambar, a physician, medical educator and cancer researcher. He has been a passionate life-long gardener and became a certified Master Gardener following his retirement from the Medical College of Wisconsin 4 years ago. As a Master Gardener, he volunteers his time regularly in the Master Gardener teaching program, working in the gardens at Boerner Botanical Gardens, and assisting in the Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens education programs. He is also on the Board of Directors of the Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens.

IF there is time, following this presentation, Deb Ciszewski, Chapter Director, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist, will show and discuss her worm compost bin and talk about the benefits, ease and joy of worm composting. If we run out of time, this can be a future topic.

Compare decomposition of a banana in a compost vs landfill. GPT says:



In a Compost Pile

- Time: Around 3 to 4 weeks (sometimes up to 2 months in cool or dry conditions).
- Why: Composting provides oxygen, microbes, and often heat, which break down organic matter quickly.

- The banana peel softens within days and is usually unrecognizable after a few weeks.
- The nutrients return to the soil as humus, enriching it.



In a Landfill

- Time: Up to 20–30 years, sometimes longer.
- Why: Landfills are anaerobic (low oxygen), compacted, and dry— not ideal for decomposition.
- Even food waste can mummify instead of decompose properly.
- Studies of excavated landfill cores have found intact banana peels, hot dogs, and newspapers decades old.

Wild One's Annual Meeting/Holiday Party

Our December meeting, 12/13/25 @ 1:15pm will be our annual meeting with elections, social time, seed sharing and soup potluck. Bring your favorite soup or dessert.

If you plan to attend the annual meeting, please text or email Jo Ann Fritz and if you plan to bring soup, chili, or dessert, please text or email with the foodie you are bringing.

Thank you!

Jo Ann Fritz t@ 847-691-3152 or joannfritz36@gmail.com.

We need help setting up for the Holiday party! Please contact Jo Ann if you are willing to help set up....better yet, if you would like to volunteer to be our new Hospitality Person.

Reminder:

Start saving your seeds now to share at our annual event in December.

Important news on chapter leadership

You may have noticed some changes in the people who are running things for the chapter. We have been seeking new chapter leadership for a while, and some current board members have now stepped up to run the chapter going forward. Pat Brust, chapter president, had to step down from the presidency recently because of a serious ongoing health situation. The board is grateful to Jo Ann Fritz for assuming the President role and Deb Ciszewski shifting into the Vice President position sooner than anticipated to assist with continuing operations and chapter requirements.

Regular elections, which this chapter usually does at the December annual meeting, still need to happen, and there are some changes to that also. Under the new National bylaw system, a chapter elects members to the board of directors, and then the board selects its officers (who agree to assume those positions). We are required to make a call for nominations and provide notice before the slate of nominees is presented to the members for a vote (in December).

If you would like to help, make our chapter better and more engaged please consider joining the chapter board of directors with a nomination by November 17. If you have a friend or someone that you see at meetings that would make a good leader, talk to them about being nominated. We would like to have some at large board members who do not have to serve as officers to help our new officers navigate their duties. The board meets every other month on a weekday evening.

At this time of transition, it is important to have the involvement and support of all our membership to ensure that our chapter continues to be vibrant, involved and productive, providing the best services to our members. Thank you for your support.

Our chapter needs a new Hospitality person to set up the refreshments table, organize treats for the meetings, etc. Interested? We'd love to have a new Hospitality person. Please call/text/or email Jo Ann @ 847-691-3152 if you're interested in this position.

Please contact us at wildones.wehr@gmail.com if you would like more information, would like to join the board, or take on some chapter responsibilities. Thank you.

Upcoming events

11/12/25: 5:00 p.m., Elm Grove library: ***Birding Symposium:***

11/20/25: 6-7 p.m., virtual and free: ***Living in the Liberated Landscape:*** <https://wildones.org/living-in-the-liberated-landscape/#register>

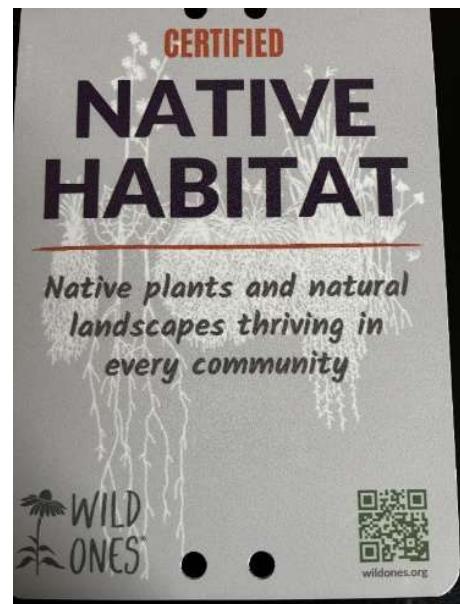
12/9/25: 5-6 p.m., virtual and free: ***Turn That Patch into a Plan:*** <https://wildones.org/turn-that-patch-into-a-plan/>

12/13/25: 1:15 p.m., Chapter Meeting @ Wehr. **See above.**

Certify your native yard

<https://wildones.org/cnhp/>

Answer questions to verify your natural habitat, pay \$50 and get a sign for your yard.



This month's book recommendation

This is the wonderful true story of how Suzanne Simard, who grew up in a logging family, discovered the absolutely magical underground world of mycelium and fungus that enables trees to communicate with and support one another. It's a beautiful example of how nature operates in community and a great lesson for us all about the vital importance of building community.

This month's resources:

1. Instead of wasting food, use all bits per a [Good Housekeeping article](#).
2. [Pollinator corridor article](#) in Green Bay Milwaukee Journal Sentinel 9/28/25:

