



**Wild Ones**  
NATIVE PLANTS, NATURAL LANDSCAPES  
FRONT RANGE



*Barr Lake, Colorado winter beauty  
Photo by Deb Lebow Aal*

## March 2022 Newsletter

*Edited by Deborah Lebow Aal*

### In this newsletter...



- Events
- Gaillardia in the Garden by Suzanne Wuerthele
- Red-Twig Dogwoods by Aaron Michael
- Colorado's Turf Replacement Bill
- Announcements & Acknowledgements

Join or Gift a Wild Ones Membership  
today!

## Upcoming Events

### Creating Pollinator Friendly Landscapes

March 9, 2022

6:30 to 8 pm

Virtual

With the decades-long drought in the Southwest, urban flower gardens are suffering, along with pollinators that have come to depend on them. George Miller, author of "Native Plant Gardening for Birds, Bees & Butterflies," will explain the use of drought-tolerant, low-maintenance native plants to create a yard that is a life-sustaining habitat for birds and insect pollinators displaced by development.

For more information and to register please go to our [website](#).

### Weed Ordinances

March 23, 2022

5pm

Our national Wild Ones' office is presenting a talk by Rosanne Plants, an Iowa attorney and business professor, on weed ordinances and how to deal with the "weed police."

For more information and to register, please go to the [Wild Ones' national website](#).

### Crevice Gardening with Kenton Seth

Virtual Workshop - April 11, 2022

Hands One Workshop - April 23, 2022

More details and registration coming soon! Check your inbox or the events section of our [website](#) for updates.

### Fort Collins Native and Pollinator-Friendly Plant Swap

June 18, 2022

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Fort Collins Native and Pollinator Plant Swap will be part of the City of Fort Collins Xeriscape Garden Party. Come enjoy the fair and check out the plant swap to pick up some native and pollinator plants and if you can, share some too! More details soon!

---

## Gaillardia in the Garden

*by Suzanne Wuerthele*



*Gaillardia as a border perennial. Photo by Suzanne Wuerthele*

We all need more color in our world now. And Gaillardia is a superb choice for the native plant garden. It's showy, easy to grow and propagate, and it attracts multiple pollinators.

Growing gaillardia isn't hard. It's not a picky plant. It has a wide distribution - from southern Canada through Utah, Colorado, and South Dakota. This means it will take to most any well-drained soil. It's even used for restoring disturbed areas. It does well in my gravel-amended Denver soil.

Gaillardia's preferred habitat is meadows in full sun, but it will tolerate light shade. I've seen it growing in forest edges in the foothills and have some plants doing well at the drip line of a large hackberry tree, where they get no more than 4-5 hours of full sun. It also requires little water, but of course like many natives, does better if watered occasionally.

Buying the native plant is probably the main challenge. Seeds are readily available in catalogs, and some nurseries in our area carry the native species: *Gaillardia aristata* (blanket flower), and *Gaillardia bipinnatifida* (cut-leaf blanket flower). But, in most nurseries you'll find cultivars. The natives have pure orange-yellow petals, sometimes with red at the base, and dark red centers; cultivars have yellow petals with bright red bands, or sometimes the flower is completely red, or even maroon. Natives grow to about 2 feet tall, with toothed or deeply toothed, lightly hairy leaves; some cultivars are dwarfs or have fairly smooth leaves.





Luckily, propagating your own plants from seed is easy, as gaillardia does not transplant well. The seeds don't need stratification and will germinate quickly after the last frost in 2-inch pots in fine garden soil (no need for potting medium or soil sterilization). I use root stimulator on the seedlings, and when the roots fill the pot, transfer them to 4-inch pots for the summer. I set them in as much sun as possible and water them daily. By fall the rosettes are ready for planting in the garden. I help establish them by watering every few days. They're on their own the second year, and with deadheading, will bloom from midsummer until hard frost. This past year, I cut my last flower in November!

Deer and elk love gaillardia too. I planted 24 carefully grown rosettes around our condo in Estes Park and the elk promptly ate 23 of them!

For more information, check out the [USDA Plant Guide](#).

And a note from the Editor: I know we highlighted this perennial last month, but it really merits another mention, I didn't love gaillardia at first. Mine were gangly, and I thought the color a bit garish, but it grew on me. It blooms for a very long time and adds an unusual pop of color to the garden. Of course I planted it in the wrong place, next to a busy sidewalk, where it often spills. But, when in bloom it gets lots of attention, and I love it.

---

## Red-Twig Dogwoods

*by Aaron Michael*



One great Colorado native plant to landscape with is Red-Twig Dogwood. This shrub, also called Red Osier Dogwood, with the Latin name *Cornus sericea*, can be found in the wild in areas such as wetlands and riparian zones where the soil is rich and poorly drains. It also can be found in areas that receive more than 20 inches of precipitation annually.

Red-Twig Dogwoods provide nectar for pollinators such as bees and butterflies as it flowers between May and June. Dogwoods then grows berries that ripen at the end of summer. These berries are eaten by many different bird and mammal species. Birds also find cover and nesting

habitat in the Dogwood's leaves during the summer and refuge in their upright stems in the winter. In the wild, beavers are known to utilize these stems to build dams!

As the Red-Twig Dogwood has such striking red stems, it is a great choice of plant for winter interest in your garden. Its cycle of leaves, flowers, berries, and stems throughout the seasons can provide much delight for you and wildlife. Dogwoods can tolerate shade, although their signature red stems will be brightest in full sun. They appreciate fertile, moist soils. For less than moist environments, if well established in its first few seasons, your Dogwood will be

drought-tolerant. A mature Dogwood will grow between six to nine feet tall and eight to 12 feet wide. With all that it does and how beautiful it is, in all four seasons in Colorado, Dogwood is an excellent choice of native plant for your landscape.



And this from the editor: While most people plant *Cornus sericea* for its winter interest, I love it all year round. I don't have one because my yard is super xeric, but I still recommend them, and as Aaron says, once they are established, they require less water.

*Red twig dogwood, Cornus Sericea, in winter*

---

## Colorado's Turf Replacement Bill

*By Deb Lebow Aal*

Would you give up your thirsty Kentucky Blue grass for money?

House Bill HB22-1151 was introduced with bi-partisan sponsorship in the Colorado House on February 4, 2022, and has a good chance of going the distance. Last week the Committee of Agriculture, Livestock, and Water voted 11-0 to move the bill on to the Committee on Appropriations. The bill, known as the Turf Replacement Program bill, would require the Colorado Water Conservation Board to develop a program to provide financial incentives for the replacement of irrigated turf with "water-wise landscaping."

The bill defines water-wise landscaping as, "water-and plant-management practice that emphasizes using plants with lower water needs," and while we want the program to specify the use of "ecologically-beneficial native plants," we think this is a true step in the right direction. As I've written about before, about 55% of Coloradan's residential water bills come from outdoor landscaping, and much of that is to water non-native Kentucky blue grass or other water-thirsty turf. Getting paid \$1 or \$2 a square foot for taking out that turf is a nice incentive! Currently, several cities in Colorado offer \$1 a square foot. Those areas will see an increase to \$2. For much more information on this bill see the [Colorado Sun article](#).

This is an important development in our drought-stricken times. Places like Las Vegas have more generous turf replacement programs, but we are encouraged by the introduction of a state-wide bill for Colorado. You can track the bill's progress at <https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb22-1151>. We will update you as it moves through the legislative system.

---

## Announcements and Acknowledgements

### *A Heartfelt Tribute In Honor of Dick and Dorothy Inglis*

We want to share with you this beautiful tribute. Don and Ruth Inglis-Widrick made a generous donation in memory of Dick and Dorothy Inglis on Colorado Gives Day, and this is what they said:

"Given the passion for the natural world and the love of teaching that Dick and Dorothy shared,

Don and I are donating to Wild Ones to support their educational efforts to enhance Colorado landscapes for all pollinators, the tiny giants (like Dorothy) that make our world livable and beautiful."

Thank you so much, Don and Ruth, and of course, Dick and Dorothy!

---

***Thanks to the Wonderful Volunteers Who Helped at the Colorado Home and Garden Show***

We had a great showing at the Colorado Home and Garden Show. We wanted to thank the wonderful Wild Ones Front Range Chapter volunteers for helping make that a resounding success. We had a busy booth, with many people stopping by to talk about creating a sustainable landscape, friendly to pollinators. Thank you, Courtney Cowgill, for organizing the booth, and the many volunteers who helped out!

---

**We Want to See your Native Plant Garden!**

Tours of our members' native gardens are some of our most popular programs! Do you have a native garden you are willing to share so others can learn and get inspired? We are accepting garden tour nominations, **particularly in Colorado Springs and Fort Collins/Loveland**. Tours will take place spring and early summer, 2022. Send us an email at [fronrangewildones@gmail.com](mailto:fronrangewildones@gmail.com) and let's chat!

---

***Complimentary Memberships***

The Board of Wild Ones Front Range is pleased to announce that complimentary chapter memberships were awarded this month to three individuals who have made huge contributions to sustainable native plant landscaping. The professional expertise and the hours of dedicated volunteer service of these new members extends from Castle Rock north to metro Denver and west to the Western Slope. The Membership Chair has sent the new member welcome packet and a 1-year membership certificate to these outstanding individuals. The WOFR Chapter is growing rapidly, with more than 250 active members.

---

***We love to hear from you! If you would like to comment on anything in this newsletter please send your comments to [FrontRangeWildOnes@gmail.com](mailto:FrontRangeWildOnes@gmail.com).***

---

Wild Ones Front Range Chapter | <https://fronrangewildones.org/>

