



“We empower Front Range residents to plant and promote native Coloradoscapes for a climate-resilient future”

The way we landscape our yards really matters to the ecosystem. We are here to help! If you would like to comment on anything in this newsletter or write an article, please email us your comments or ideas. And, any photos you have of your native plant garden or insects or birds on your native plants, please send us!

Email Us!



Wildflowers at Ute Lake, CO (Photo by John Fielder)

July/August 2026

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Become a member today!

Message from the Chapter President

It is such a privilege to be a part of this organization. After participating in some of the plant swaps this past month, and hearing about others, I can honestly say I have never seen more dedicated volunteers than this organization has. The amount of work that went into these events and the way they were organized is truly special. So, thank you to all the volunteers who made these Wild Ones Front Range plant swaps so successful. The value we give to our communities, and to the ecosystem, is incomparable. There are many like-minded organizations out there – Audubon, PPAN, CoNPS, Sierra Club, etc, to name a few who do amazing work, but what we do is unique. To quote one of our members “We don’t just talk, we actually do stuff.” We get things done on (and in!) the ground. And we make a difference to the ecosystem, one native plant at a time, one neighbor at a time.

So, thank you again, WOFR members who have stepped up to the plate. For those of you still wanting to do more, please contact your regional coordinators, [listed here](#).

I am honored to be the President of this Chapter. Thank you.

Deborah Lebow Aal



Jeffco Plant Share



Douglas/Ebert County Plant Swap



Pikes Peak Plant Swap



Boulder+ Plant Swap



Denver Plant Swap

Overlooked Native Plants

By Kristine Johnson

Imagine a native plant garden. What do you see? Most of us picture colorful and attractive flowers, mostly of a certain shape and a certain height, but growing native plants is so much more than that. This article will encourage you to think a little outside the box to consider different types of flowers, varied forms of plants, and perhaps functions that you've not yet focused on.

Many garden certification programs other than our own [Wild Ones program](#) require gardeners to include native plants of different forms (trees, shrubs, grasses, succulents, vines, and so on), because research shows that these varied lifestyles of plants serve a wider variety of pollinators, birds and other wildlife than herbaceous flowering plants alone. Consider checking out the [Xerces Assessment Guide for Pollinator Habitat in Yards](#); also check out the Audubon [Habitat Hero Program](#).



A bee gathers nectar from the white flower of Mentzelia nuda (Bractless Blazingstar). (Photo by Sharon O'Brien)

To Read the Rest of the Article

The Nature of Ft. Collins

by Karen Vanderwall

People living along the Front Range are becoming more aware that conserving water and establishing native habitats is vital to managing our regional drought and supporting local pollinators. The City of Fort Collins is innovating and leading, locally and nationally, by weaving together the built environment and natural ecosystems. Driven by community funding and new initiatives, the city strives to provide high-quality ecological habitats throughout Fort Collins and to ensure green spaces are integrated into the daily lives of residents wherever possible.

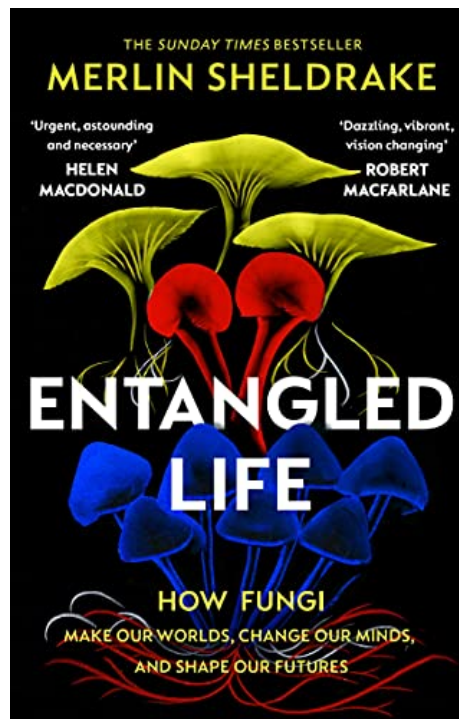
If you haven't been to Fort Collins, you're missing out - Fort Collins (FOCO) has water-wise and native plants everywhere! Driving to my grocery store yesterday, I saw several beautiful blooming prickly pear cacti in the median. A native plant lover must remember to keep eyes on the road!



Landscaped traffic median in Fort Collins (Photo by the author)

To Read the Rest of the Article

Book Review



By Karen Vanderwall

Fungi are their own kingdom, the highest category in the classification system for all living things on Earth. There are only 6 kingdoms: animals, plants, fungi, and three that are mostly single-celled organisms. Taking a minute to fully process that fact, I realized how little I knew about fungi.

To Read the Rest of the Article

Plant Stories

Datura: An Unnatural Native Plant

By Richard Phillips



Datura in Ful Bloom. (Photo by Vicki Saragoussi Phillips)

One of my wife's (Vicki) favorite plants is poisonous.

I was supposed to write an article about the Maximilian Sunflower (*Helianthus maximiliani*). In bed last night, I spent wakeful interludes making a mental list of what I needed to research and include in the article. Then, at breakfast, Vicki opened her phone and showed me her collection of Datura (*Datura wrightii*) pictures. I was so enchanted, that I decided that those pictures needed to be in the newsletter, so I changed my subject.

To Read the Rest of the Article

Chapter News

Would you like to write for us? If so, please reach out and contact us!

Our next Board Meetings are on July 15 and August 19, from 6-8 pm. If you have any interest in joining our board, consider attending our meeting this month to see how we operate. [Email us](#) to get an invitation.

Call for More Volunteers

Our Wild Ones Chapter is growing so fast, our small volunteer board can't keep up! With 844 members, we are by far the largest of the 98 chapters across the nation, and while we love having this explosive growth, we need more help and active engagement from more of our members. Here are a few areas we want to highlight:

Pikes Peak Regional Co-Coordinator: As you probably know, the Front Range Chapter of Wild Ones has six regions. One of our six is the Pikes Peak Region, which includes Colorado Springs and neighboring towns. The Pikes Peak Region is looking for an enthusiastic and energetic Regional Co-coordinator, starting in January. Our outgoing Co-Coordinator, Sue Wright, and existing Co-Coordinator, Louise Conner, will help with the transition. The Front Range Chapter is organized by geography to increase local member engagement and connection. Each region hosts at least 2 member gatherings each year, with at least one of these being a Member Garden Crawl, a plant swap and/or a seed swap.

Responsibilities include:

- Collaborating with Co-coordinator Louise Conner.
- Organizing meetings and planning committees.
- Delegating event responsibilities.
- Sending out email information to Pikes Peak Region members.
- Coordinating and documenting event happenings in the Pikes Peak Region for the Wild Ones Front Range Chapter.
- Attending monthly chapter board meetings (via Zoom).

This is a fun and rewarding volunteer position and a great way to connect with the Pikes Peak native plant community.

To apply for any of the positions please contact fronrangewildones@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

Check out our website's [Events](#) Page for [registration](#) links and full event details!

Events/Partners of Interest to WOFR Members

July 14, 2026, Tuesday, 8:30-9:30 AM, Citizen Science Project: iNaturalist Bioblitz at Mt. Vernon Garden of Denver's Washington Park, no previous experience required. [For More Info.](#)

August 19, 2026, Wednesday, 8:30-9:30 AM, Citizen Science Project: iNaturalist Bioblitz at the Big Garden of Denver's Washington Park, no previous experience required. [For More Info.](#)

Zero-Cost Donation!

There's a simple way you can contribute financially to WOFR, without spending any money! A *free donation*! Link WOFR (Wild Ones Front Range Chapter) with your King Soopers Card. Their [Community Rewards Program](#) will then make a contribution to WOFR at the end of the year, based on the total number of purchases made by the people who have linked their card to our organization. **Do it today!**



We love hearing from you!

If you would like to comment on anything in this newsletter or write an article, please [email us](#) your comments or ideas.

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



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