



I Wanted A Meadow

by Benjamin Hedges

“Lawns, I am convinced, are a symptom of, and a metaphor for, our skewed relationship to the land.”

MICHAEL POLLAN
IN *SECOND NATURE*

With this statement tucked away in my gray matter, and the approaching end of my professional career, some seven years ago I began the search for a new home. Among other requirements, I sought freedom from social and political constraints on lawn maintenance, and freedom from the noise and air pollution of countless hours of power mowers operating around me. I wanted quiet, I wanted a garden, and I wanted a meadow.

I had been an apartment dweller for several years, and in my free time I roamed the natural areas and parks in Downstate New York, reading about and studying the flora of the area. I became aware of invasive plants and the distinction between natives and exotics. I volunteered to help a local environmental group work to control some of the invasives in New York City natural areas. And I was ready to get my hands dirty on my own plot of ground.

The property that I eventually acquired, about an acre with a house, a lawn, a few trees, and invasive shrubbery encroaching on two sides, had a traditional manicured lawn and little else for landscaping. Immediately upon purchase, lawn mowing ceased, and shortly thereafter ground was broken for garden beds.

My goal that first summer was to chip away at the sod and expand the variety of plants on the property with whatever I could get my hands on free. Accordingly, a number of non-native forbs were introduced because I could get them free and because I had not yet developed a sense for why natives were important.

Enter Douglas Tallamy, in *Bringing Nature Home: “By favoring native plants over aliens in the suburban landscape, gardeners can do much to sustain the biodiversity that has been one of this country’s richest assets.”* Reading his book has sharpened my focus. Now approaching my eighth growing season, my current goal is to reduce the number of exotics and to increase the variety of natives on the property.

Starting that first summer, I inventoried the flora on my property and developed a list of the plants I could identify, with their native or exotic status. The list has continued to grow, with now over 100 native plants and some 50 exotics (mostly weedy forbs). Most of my natives either came with the place, having survived the mowing, or have moved back in now that the mower is absent. I have purchased a few native plants and seeds, some at local nurseries and some at plant sales, but time and money are scarce. I still have to

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President Debra Grim first came in contact with Ben by reading his Facebook comment: “I was given this week a brochure developed by the Lehigh County Conservation District titled ‘Caring for your Streamside Property’. It has some reasons

for going native, and illustrates some 36 native wetland species. Very nice brochure. Available here from the Adams County Conservation District. I have 14 of the listed plants on my rural one-acre plot, so I still have some work to do.”

2009 Native Plants in the

by Jean Najjar

I must begin this report by thanking the Pennsylvania Native Plant Society for providing me with this opportunity to participate in the 2009 *Native Plants in the Landscape Conference*. It was a lively and stimulating event that moved me to recommit myself to being an advocate of natives in the landscape.

The conference bridged the gap between multiple disciplines of science and the arts. There was an amazing assortment of perspectives represented including those from historians, botanists, ecologists, engineers, nursery men, horticulturists, artists and designers.

The Dramatist Kirk R. Brown opened the meeting with a wonderfully entertaining representation of John Bartram. As the lights went down, his voice transported the audience back in time to the days of early plant exploration in the colonies. He covered Bartram's historical significance and personal story in such an entertaining first person that his presentation seemed to be over before it had begun.

This historic perspective was followed with a contemporary look at "Nature's Patterns in Art and Landscape Design" presented by Gary Smith. Mr. Smith took the



audience on a tour of patterns found commonly in nature and demonstrated how these scenes in nature acted as his inspiration for garden design. The images he presented were beautiful and it was wonderful to see his design process, which seemed effortless. In a subsequent session, Mr. Smith highlighted his work on the newly installed "Enchanted Woods", part of the Winterthur Garden in Delaware. The whimsy

of this garden is sure to delight young and old.

Rick Lewandowski, the Director of the Mt. Cuba Center in Northern Delaware, spoke about exploring natural habitats as a way to better understand and utilize native plants in our home gardens. Perhaps PNPS can arrange a field trip to Mt. Cuba Center for those who would like to experience first-hand this gift of conservation that includes over 600 acres of native woods and wetlands.

Steven Saffier and Mitch Harper presented an interesting look at the Native Plants in John James Audubon's Art. Most interesting to me was the fact that Audubon left much of the plant illustrations to his assistants, so he could pursue his study of the next bird. Representing the Audubon Society, Mr. Saffier wrapped up the presentation with information about how to create bird habitats using native plants. The Audubon Society is offering a wonderful grant opportunity for groups creating these birdscares. It seems like a great opportunity for the PNPS.

The conference sold out of the latest edition of Doug Tallamy's book, *Bringing Nature Home*. His presentation was reminiscent of the talk he gave two years ago at the PNPS Annual Meeting but there were plenty of new examples of fascinating creatures that we can invite into our home landscapes if we just plant more natives.

The last full audience speaker was Dr. Roger Tai Koide. Another entertaining speaker, Dr. Koide studies mycorrhizal fungi at Penn State. His work on this mostly unseen organism is not something that should be overlooked by those of us who wish to conserve and revitalize the native landscape.

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Landscape Conference

It was difficult to choose from the concurrent sessions. Three women from different but related fields drew my attention. Dorothy Merritts gave a fascinating talk on “The Legacy of Water-Powered Milling in the Mid-

In addition to all these wonderful speakers the conference included guided interpretive walks, large selections of native plants for sale, and a multitude of friendly people who appreciate the beauty of native plants. In closing,

this conference is one that shouldn't be missed. There is no “save the date” at this time; as the conference will be temporarily relocated for renovations. I strongly recommend though, that you keep an eye out for news the 2010 Native Plants in the Landscape Conference.



Atlantic.” What she and her husband have rediscovered about human history in the Mid-Atlantic region is changing our understanding of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Susan Barton spoke about selling biodiversity to the public, local governments, and the work crews that maintain those lands. And Tavis Dockwiller discussed the influences of site on the success and failure of landscape design projects. All three of these women gave excellent talks which emphasized the importance of native plants and understanding the site.

Information about the 2010 NPITL Conference, June 2–5, is available online at www.millersvillennativeplants.org

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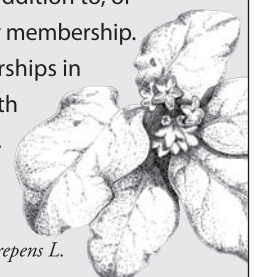
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Epigaea repens L.

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April 18, Sunday — Dysart State Gamelands 84 — field trip led by Harry Henderson of PNPS to this location near Altoona. Meet at Boalsburg Military Museum parking lot at 10 a.m. A favorite spring wildflower location, the hillsides at Dysart have dense populations of many natives including: blue cohosh, coltsfoot, *Carex plantaginea*, round-leaved (yellow) violet — very common, spicebush, Carolina (wide leaf) spring beauty, yellow trout lily. Contact: Harry Henderson, harry@meteo.psu.edu.

April 24, Saturday — Pennsylvania Rare Plant Forum, 10:00 a.m. – about 2:30 p.m. Miller Conference Room, Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18766. All people interested in the conservation of Pennsylvania's native flora are encouraged to attend this meeting. This is an excellent opportunity to connect and work with other botanists, amateur and professional, who share your interest in the flora of Pennsylvania. For further information contact: Chairperson Steve Grund, sgrund@paconserve.org, 412-586-2350.

May 1, Saturday — Pennsylvania Native Plant Society's Sale – abration at Rhoneymeade Arboretum and Sculpture Garden in Centre Hall, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Centre County, PA — Rimmey Road off Rt. 45 between Old Fort and Boalsburg.

Beautiful grounds featuring sculpture garden, arboretum, a maze and a labyrinth.

Silent auction featuring plants and other items donated by members and vendors.

See the complete event listing and photos elsewhere in this issue!

May 1, Saturday — the Manada Conservancy will hold its 10th annual Spring Native Plant Sale from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m. at Meadowood Nursery, Hummelstown, Pa. Hundreds of native wildflowers, ferns, grasses and woody vines, water garden plants, trees and shrubs will be offered for sale. Special guest and popular speaker, Dr. Roger Koide, will give presentations on the hidden world of Mycorrhizal Fungi and their crucial relationship to soil and plants. Proceeds benefit The Manada Conservancy. The sale will be held rain or shine. Admission is free. A catalogue to pre-order plants can be obtained after March 21 by calling The Conservancy at 717-566-4122. Friday, April 30, 2010 from 5 p.m. till 8 p.m., Member's Night,

there will be a special reception and sale of plants. Dr. Ann Fowler Rhoads, author of *The Plants of Pennsylvania* will give a presentation on "Life in the Forest Understory". The Manada Conservancy is a local, non-profit membership organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of the natural, historic, agricultural and scenic resources in Pennsylvania's Dauphin County. It is based in Hummelstown. For more information or to become a member of The Manada Conservancy you may visit www.manada.org, e-mail manadaconservancy@verizon.net or call the office at 717-566-4122.

May 2, Sunday — Rocky Ridge Natural Area, Huntingdon County: Four-mile hike in this geologically and botanically rich area along the Standing Stone Trail north of Huntingdon. Meet at McDonald's on Rt. 22 in Huntingdon at noon or at the Boalsburg Military Museum at noon. Juniata Valley Audubon Society. Dr. Stan Kotala 946-8840, ccwiba@keyconn.net.

May 9, Sunday — Annual Mother's Day Wildflower Walk on Rockview property, Centre County. 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Extremely popular tour of a wildflower area that is off limits the rest of the year. Sponsored by ClearWater Conservancy with help from PNPS. For further information contact: Ieva Perkons, Outreach and Events Coordinator, 814-237-0400.



Rhoneymeade image courtesy of James Leshner

May 15, Saturday — MAEScapes Native Plant Festival from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Native plant sales with vendors from across the region, free lectures and tours of the native plants display gardens. Located at the York County Annex, 112 Pleasant Acres Rd., York, PA. Visit our website: www.MAEScapes.org for a list of vendors and more information.

May 16, Sunday — Juniata Valley Audubon Society Birds And Wildflowers Day: Peak spring migration for birds and the height of early ephemeral wildflowers combine to make this the spectacle of the JVAS year. This event is free to all JVAS members or to those who sign up for JVAS membership at the event. \$10 for nonmembers. Meet at the Canoe Creek State Park Environmental Education Center at 2 p.m. ccwiba@keyconn.net

May 22, Saturday — Native Plant Fest of the Alleghenies, Johnstown Heritage Discovery Center, Cambria County, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. In addition to a great selection of native plants for sale, there will be several speakers including Dr. Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*. For more information visit www.natural-biodiversity.org/news.



May 22-23, Sat-Sun — Joint field trip in central PA with Muhlenberg Botanical Society. Possible destinations include Fisherman's Paradise, Big Hollow Prairies, Rocky Ridge Natural Area. Contact Harry Henderson, harry@meteo.psu.edu or Larry Klotz, LHKLOT@ship.edu for more information.

May 29, Saturday — PNPS field trip to the SRWA Garden Tour and Native Plant Sale Elk

Ridge Native Plant Preserve from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tour this Maryland wildlife habitat garden to see a variety of conservation landscaping and wildlife habitat practices you can use to enhance biodiversity around your home, school, or office. Experience the joys of conservation landscaping: a garden filled with bees, birds, butterflies and beautiful plants. Free guided tours at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. A variety of native plants (grasses, sedges, wildflowers, shrubs and trees) will be available for purchase. All proceeds benefit the **Savage River Watershed Association**. For more information email the **Savage River Watershed**

Association at SRWAcoordinator@gmail.com or call Liz McDowell, SRWA native plant sale coordinator, at 301-895-3686.

Directions — From the entrance to New Germany State Park, turn left into park onto McAndrews Hill Road and travel 2 miles to stop sign at Westernport Road. Turn right and travel 0.25 mile to Red Hill Road. Turn right and drive 0.5 mile to Elk Ridge Lane. Turn left onto private Elk Ridge Lane and drive 0.3 miles.

Contact Debra Grim at 814-355-4102 or dgrim@diagnosticsplus.com to carpool to Elk Ridge from the State College (Centre County PA) area.

June 2-5, Thu.-Sat. — Native Plants in the Landscape Conference Millersville University, Lancaster County. Premier event for speakers, field trips, plant sale, networking with native plant enthusiasts. See the article in this newsletter about last year's conference. Register at http://www.millersvillenaiveplants.org/Conference_info.php.

NOTE: PNPS is planning to hold an informal gathering for members during the conference; check the PNPS website or Facebook page for more information.

June 20-24, Sunday-Thursday — 2010 Joint Field Meeting of the Botanical Society of America, North-eastern Section; Torrey Botanical Society; Philadelphia Botanical Club. Buxton School, Williamstown, MA. Field trips, by bus, will include Mt. Greylock, the highest mountain in Massachusetts with its own unique sub-alpine boreal forest and rare plants, and Bartholomew's Cobble, National Natural Landmark, where "you'll find one of North America's greatest diversity of fern species" and many interesting plants amid the unusual geology of the cobbles. Other trips will depend on the best botanical locations at the time. There will be a variety of evening lectures. For further information contact: Chairperson Nan Williams, 413-339-5598 or nnwrowe@gmail.com.

New Botanic Field Trips Website. Muhlenberg Club and the Philadelphia Botanic Club have set up a web site listing their field trips which are open to other interested people. Other botanical groups from much of northeastern and mid-Atlantic United States, including PNPS, are participating. People from all over the region can use the site to plan their botanizing. The site is <http://sites.google.com/site/botanicfieldtrips/>.

Ten Years

A Growing Legacy
From The Manada
Conservancy to Central Pennsylvania

20,000 Native Plants

The Manada Conservancy is the region's local land trust. The Conservancy is well known for its annual native plant sales and on May 1 will celebrate its tenth annual spring sale of native species. The event has an interesting history. Ten years ago, the Conservancy was beginning to expand and needed operating funds. It wanted to generate these in a way that supported its dual mission of land preservation and education and in a way that was sensitive to the environment. The organization decided to grow and sell native plants, a relatively new concept in our area at that time.

The initiative was greatly aided by the donation of greenhouse space. The first year, the Conservancy ordered 700 plugs, grew them up in the donated space, and then transported them all in vehicles of every description from pick up truck to horse trailer to a spot behind the tennis courts on Hershey's Cocoa Avenue where the sale was set up. To the delight of everyone, the plants sold out. Clearly there was a budding market for natives.

In the years that followed, more plants were grown and sold, a catalogue was introduced, volunteers were recruited in significant numbers to aid in the increasing work that included watering, organizing of orders, transporting to the sale site, and selling. Volunteers learned which plants did well under the conditions in which they were being grown and which ones did not. There were many successes and some failures. After a number of years at the Cocoa Avenue site, the venue was changed to Schaffner Park in Hummelstown where the pavilion provided shelter from the elements.

In 2006, a crisis arose when the greenhouse space was needed by the owner. The Conservancy had to scramble for a new spot in which to grow up the plugs. It was fortunate to be given the use of an old greenhouse on Route 22 in West Hanover Township, at the former Flower Factory. This building served the emergency needs very satisfactorily; however it was evident that if the sale were to continue, things would have to change. It was at that time that Meadowood Nursery was established in South Hanover Township by proprietors Jan Getgood and Ernie Johnson. These committed environmentalists had perceived the need for a native plant nursery to serve

the increasing demand for native plant restorations in the region and they offered to cooperate with the Manada Conservancy to grow their plants. This arrangement has evolved and is perceived by all concerned to be a positive development. The Nursery now grows the stock and provides the venue for the sale. The Conservancy purchases the plants from the Nursery and sells them at both its major spring and smaller fall sales. To date more than 20,000 natives have been introduced into local gardens a result of the Conservancy's sales. Each year, the event attracts more people as the word spreads that the stock is superbly grown, the venue incomparably beautiful and the variety unexcelled anywhere in the area.

When the Manada Conservancy initiated its first efforts, it knew that growing and planting native species was important. Many once common native species were being lost due to development and to the incursion of invasives such as multiflora rose, Japanese honeysuckle and oriental bittersweet. Encouraging the planting of natives in the home landscape seemed like a good way to counter this trend. Over the years, it has become evident that there are other reasons for focusing on native species in the home landscape. Without native plants, the insects and birds that co-evolved with them disappear. The ecosystem becomes increasingly impoverished and diversity declines. As one meanders through the beautiful space at Meadowood Nursery, it is possible to see and hear the diversity that accrues in the midst of abundant native plants. The surrounding woods are full of bird song. The grounds are enhanced by the abundant butterflies that hatch from eggs laid on the native plants; hummingbirds zip through the sprinklers and nectar on many of the blooming natives.

Many local gardeners are achieving similar successes thanks to their focus on natives. The Manada Conservancy encourages everyone with a bit of space to consider using native plant species in the home landscape. All are welcome to attend the sale on May 1 at Meadowood Nursery. Members are invited to attend a special Members' Only night the evening of Friday, April 30. For more information about the Manada Conservancy and how to become a supporting member, visit the Conservancy's website at www.manada.org.

2010 Plant Sale-aboration Saturday, May 1



9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rhoneymeade in Centre Hall, Centre County, PA
Rimney Road off Rt. 45 between Old Fort & Boalsburg

Beautiful grounds featuring sculpture garden, arboretum,
a maze and a labyrinth

Silent auction featuring plants and other items donated
by members and vendors.

Go to www.rhoneymeade-usa.org/directions.htm for a
map and directions.

Plants for sale by:

- Sarah Berndt
- Dave & Dianne Corman, Springhaven Nursery
- Stephen Fast
- Susan & Greta Haney, Long Lane Farm
- Steve Kidd, Perennial Gardens
- Stan Kotala
- John Rosenfeld, Go Native Tree Farm
- Leo Sammis
- Effie Zuck, Fox Hill Gardens

Art for sale by:

- Deb Fisher, hypertufa containers and rock gardens
- Karen Sandorf, native and garden art reproductions
and veggie & herb starts
- Bob Snyder, photography
- Lisa Dawn White, botanical collages

Other participants:

- Audubon at Home
- ClearWater Conservancy
- Juniata Valley Audubon Society
- Leslie Zuck, Common Ground Farms
- Tait Farm
- United Way of Blair County Community Garden

I Wanted A Meadow

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

share my gardening time with part-time work and other duties. Gardening time is divided between vegetable beds and the meadow. Much of the meadow work consists of weeding. Although the meadow grass suppresses many common lawn weeds, both exotic and native invasives are always finding their way in, there are still many exotics to be eliminated, and normal succession, if allowed, will revert my meadow to a mesic woodland.

Despite the challenges of keeping up with nature's fecundity, maintaining a no-mow meadow and wildlife-friendly habitat has so far been successful. I may never have a truly natural meadow, but for now I have what I wanted. Obsessive gardener that I am, my only regret is that with each passing year I have less energy to devote to expanding my native plant inventory and purging the more tenacious exotics.

Find PNPS on Facebook!

Pennsylvania

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PNPS Plant Sale Info

Donating plants to the plant sale?

- Please label each plant you bring with its Latin name.
- If possible, have a picture and cultivation information. You can download and print information off the Internet or photocopy from a book.
- If you contact Diane Albright at least 3 days beforehand (by end of day Wednesday April 28) at correspondence@pawildflower.org, she can make tags with pictures for you.
- We will have reference books, blank tags and markers, and special PA Native tags available, and will be there to help donors and shoppers.
- We prefer you to bring natives; if not, please clearly identify as non-natives. Don't bring any invasive plants.
- Thank you — member donations are the heart of the plant sale.

Plant sale volunteers needed

We need the following volunteers **at minimum**:

- 2 people to direct traffic between 8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m.
- 5 people between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. to help set up PNPS tent and silent auction tables and sign in plant donations
- 2-hour shifts of 2 people to help with silent auction and membership from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.
- 5 people between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. to collect silent auction money and take down tent & tables
- At least 3 people to man the information booth in 2 hour shifts between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- The more help we have, the more time everyone will get to shop and socialize.

All volunteers will get a free PNPS t-shirt.

Please email info@pawildflower.com or contact Debra Grim at 814-355-4102 if you can help.