

Art & Linda's Wildflowers

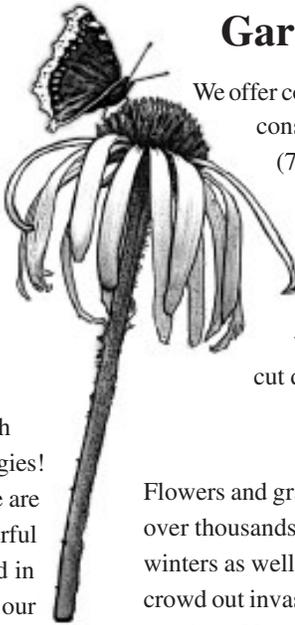
Capturing the Spirit of the Natural World

 Spring 2007

Catch the Spirit Early!

By Art Gara, Art and Linda's Wildflowers

Welcome back Friends and Wildflower Lovers! We hope your winter season was full of anticipation for your installed (or soon to be installed), gorgeous, wildflower garden! This is an excellent time of year to visit our updated website on-line at: artandlindaswildflowers.com. Here you'll find helpful hints and lovely photos to reacquaint yourself with the beautiful colors of wildflowers in Spring, Summer and Fall. For more info, feel free to call us at (708)785-2943.



Garden Services Guaranteed

We offer complete native garden design, installation, professional consultation and stewardship services. Give us a call at (708)785-2943 or visit artandlindaswildflowers.com, and let Art and Linda's Wildflowers create your own, special garden with beautiful native wildflowers and grasses. Consider our "Early Bird Special", as described in this newsletter, to root out invasive weeds - the sooner the better - and to get the garden cut down, remulched and tidied up.

Why Go Native ?

Flowers and grasses that are native to the Chicago area have adapted over thousands of years to suit our particular climate - our harsh winters as well as our blistering summers. Once established, natives crowd out invasive species and gradually do a good deal of their own weeding. Native plants also need less and less watering as tap roots reach deep down into the soil, obtaining all the water they need - when they need it most. These features alone will save you time, not to mention dollars. And what a pleasure the native garden is with its unique scents, colors and textures changing throughout each of the four seasons. Your native garden also benefits the natural world around you. You'll notice that it will attract many more interesting birds, butterflies and other insects. Feel free to go to our website and begin to get ideas based upon the lovely wildflower gardens that we have planted: artandlindaswildflowers.com

Last year, Art and Linda's was blessed with new business which expanded our operations but placed quite a demand on our energies! Now, we're all rested up and ready for a new season. While we are thrilled with the new work that came to us through your wonderful referrals and references, we realize that this may have resulted in some mishaps on our part. Normally, we try to get back to all of our customers at least once during the year and to follow up on each and every lead we are given. So, please accept our apologies if we missed getting back to you or contacting you. We hope you'll forgive us!

In the spirit of getting back to basics, we wish to announce the "Early Bird Special". Our existing customers will receive a 10% discount on plants and labor if they call for our Stewardship Program before April 1st. Here are the services we offer you:

Art & Linda's

Early Bird Special!

Call by APRIL 1ST!!
(708) 785-2943

- Cut down old growth
- Remulch garden
- Build compost bins
- Remove buckthorn & weed the garden
- Explain how to become certified through The Conservation Foundation's "Conservation@Home" Program

For more info be sure to visit:
artandlindaswildflowers.com.

TAKE 10% OFF



(Also, see our price sheet enclosed in this newsletter). We continue to emphasize how important it is to get an early start. Your garden may need some basic stewardship and just a bit of early planning will make a big, big difference in what you see in the seasons to come. So, get started now and let us help you become your own best steward! Call us soon at (708) 785-2943.

Home Garden Certification Program



You'll notice that we have enclosed a beautiful, color brochure in this mailing with a pre-printed application form. It's entitled, "Conservation@Home" issued by The Conservation Foundation of Naperville, Illinois. We think you may find it of great interest.

Throughout this newsletter, you will note that we have placed our *butterfly symbol* in strategic places. The butterfly indicates items that you will need in order to qualify for the certification and to receive the lovely plaque above for your own outdoor wildflower garden. Please read the article on page two and the enclosed brochure to familiarize yourself with how to apply. For more info visit: artandlindaswildflowers.com or call (708)-785-2943.

Native Gardening at Home

Gardens for Small Spaces

Courtyards, tiny front yards, meditation gardens - Do you have special places like these, where you thought a wildflower garden wouldn't fit? The good news is that you don't need a huge amount of room for a native garden. Small, native gardens will do *just* fine. Generally, we use smaller plants and thoughtful design.



Getting the Right Mix

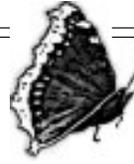
Flowers, grasses, shrubs, sedges and trees - in fact, a large variety of species - can be successfully blended together if done in concert. This is all important, especially around the house. Naturally, in addition to the right look, plants must be compatible with their environment.

Shapes

Shapes are very important when mixing plants together, especially with shrubs. Think of "tucking" smaller plants in and around other larger ones. Accommodating shapes are vital to a garden or your plants will clash and look out of place, discordant or uncomfortable. Planting around the house or creating these beds is really an art form and one can not expect success if one just throws things together and hopes for the best. The word to keep in mind is "hospitable" when creating this more complex environment. Remember that plants, insects and birds have also co-evolved and co-existed for thousands of years in the natural world. Art and Linda's Wildflowers considers all of the above in our garden planning as well as in our stewardship. We prune the shrubs in order to help them maintain their beautiful, friendly and warm look and to keep them from getting overgrown.

A Succession of Blooms and Interest

When mixing different plants in concert, one also has to consider the seasons. Different plants bloom at different times. We choose from a wide selection of native flowers and shrubs that look beautiful all year. The native shrubs we use have beautiful flowers in the spring and summer with a rich, green foliage. In the fall their leaves turn the colors of crimson, gold, purple, red, rose pink and brown. Winter reveals their interesting bark and deep colored berries. Try going on-line to Possibility Place (possibilityplace.com) to see the photos and descriptions of the different native shrubs available.



Home Garden Certification Program

You deserve recognition!

Encouraging native plant growth and improving water quality with rain gardens makes a strong environmental statement within your community. More importantly it represents a promise to yourself to remain a good steward of the earth. Your efforts have a direct and positive benefit on our environment. You, and others like you, should be recognized for your protection of our vanishing, natural heritage. We have enclosed a brochure in this mailing from the Conservation Foundation of Naperville, Illinois, that deals with this subject and which we think you will find of great interest. Please visit them at theconservationfoundation.org

Certification by The Conservation Foundation

"Established in 1972 by business and community leaders who share your love of the environment, The Conservation Foundation is a private, non profit organization dedicated to preserving natural areas, restoring our water quality and promoting positive environmental activities in DuPage, Kane, Kendall and Will Counties, Illinois. This organization has become a well-respected, reasoned and sought after voice on conservation issues." -TCF Brochure



The "Conservation@Home" Program

This program involves applying to The Conservation Foundation by using with a brief questionnaire. Your responses to various questions that concern your home garden may qualify you to receive a special yard plaque (left). This plaque recognizes your great efforts to protect and/or create yards that are nature-friendly and that conserve water. Some of the questions on the checklist ask if you have; native plants incorporated into existing flower beds, downspouts that are directed to vegetated areas, compost bins for yard waste, bird feeders and bird baths.

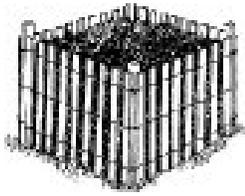


Certification by Art & Linda's Wildflowers:

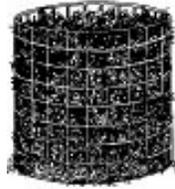
Art and Linda's can certify your garden if it's not in the geographical area covered by The Conservation Foundation. Call .(708)785-2943, or visit our site for more info (www.artandlindaswildflowers.com) Please read the enclosed CF brochure to learn how to apply.



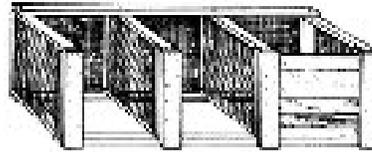
Composting



HOLDING UNIT



SNOW FENCE HOLDING UNIT



3-BIN COMPOST UNIT

Why Compost?

Actually, why *not* compost? What better solution for dispensing with cut down, old growth garden clippings and leaves? Instead of filling endless plastic garbage bags with your lawn and garden waste and then hauling them to the dump, you could be recycling - the natural way! Creating compost on your own property, in your very own compost bin, will allow you to take the fullest advantage of a rich source of nutrients - biodegraded plant growth. This material will fertilize your plants as the natural process of decay provides compost for many uses in the garden.

The material produced by one of these units will help to control weeds when placed on the surface as well as reduce evaporation. (Learn more about composting at: artandlindaswildflowers.com). Whether you have a small yard or a larger one, Art and Linda's can build compost bins for you.

The Compost Bin

There are several different types of composting methods. Some of the ones we suggest for your garden - and the ones we can build for you - are pictured above. These are the **“Holding Unit, the Snow Fence Holding Unit and the Wood and Wire Three-Bin Turning Unit.** The simpler, Holding Units will *hold* your garden materials until composting is complete. This process can take six months to two years without needing to turn the contents.

The Wood and Wire, Three Bin Turning Unit can be used to compost larger amounts of yard and garden waste more quickly. Although more time consuming and expensive to build, this is very sturdy and should last a long time. The plant material in the turning unit is designed to be “turned” or aerated more frequently. Therefore, this system usually works faster than simple holding units. We start by taking yard and garden waste from the top of the end section and moving it to the bottom of the next area. Here, it is mixed with rich soil and other microorganisms. This way the aerobic bacteria are given the oxygen they need to break down raw materials. By maintaining the Three Bin Unit, the contents of your bin quickly decay into a rich material that will add plenty of nutrients to the plants.

Let us build the appropriate composting unit for you and begin creating your own, rich, natural mulch to use on your very own garden, as soon as possible.

More About Our Plants

~ Our Promise ~

We use plants that are healthy, hardy and naturally beautiful. We have an extensive plant list and grow many native varieties that you cannot get anywhere else. We will personally help you to select the right plants for your yard and provide detailed information about bloom times, sun requirements, soil, moisture needs and more. We want your garden to look as beautiful as possible and are so confident that our plants will perform well that we guarantee them for a full year. If a plant is officially declared dead within that time we will replace it with another one of the same type or one more appropriate for your garden setting or refund your money.

The plants we use in our landscaping are suitable for a variety of Northeastern Illinois garden sites. For acidic, shady locations we offer woodland plants, such as spring-blooming flowers and ferns. For dry sunny areas, we have short and tall grasses as well as summer and fall-blooming wildflowers that attract butterflies. For cooler damper areas, we have a wide range of moisture loving plants.

Check our website for native plant sales sponsored by nature groups and nonprofit organizations! www.artandlindaswildflowers.com

Art and Linda in the Community

This schedule and more information about Native Wildflower gardens is also available on our website: artandlindaswildflowers.com

Slide Shows and Presentations

Art and Linda's Wildflowers continues its commitment to nonprofit nature organizations, schools and community groups that work to maintain and restore native plant habitats. We are available to present our one-hour multimedia slide shows: "Wolf Road Prairie Through the Seasons" and "Art and Linda's Gardens" to garden clubs and other groups.

The first program offers an artistic and educational journey through majestic Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve in Westchester, Illinois.

The latter takes you on a tour of many of our gardens and projects in the Chicagoland area. More info is available at our website: artandlindaswildflowers.com Or call us at (708)785-2943 to schedule a showing.



Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve Benefit Sale

Sunday, May 20th - 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Art Gara, Art & Linda's Wildflowers

Find the best selections of sun and shade loving native plants at the annual Save the Prairie Society Benefit Sale in front of the Franzosenbusch Prairie House in Westchester. The Prairie House is located at the extreme north end of Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve on Constitution Drive just west of Wolf Road. (South of Cermak and North of 31st Street) Parking is available along the parkway. **For directions and info on Wolf Road Prairie, go to www.savetheprairiesociety.org.** SPS also provides informative monthly lectures on site all year long and conducts interesting tours of the prairie, led by knowledgeable, volunteer guides.

2007 SLIDE SHOW SCHEDULE

Thursday March 15th 1:00pm	Chicagoland Flower and Garden Show The Flower Show runs March 10th - 18th. This is a new location for the show, which will no longer be at Navy Pier. We will do our slide show but WILL NOT be an exhibitor or vendor.	Donald E Stevens Convention Center River Road near the Kennedy Expressway (I90), Rosemont, IL
Tuesday March 20 7:00pm	Batavia Plain Dirt Gardeners For more info contact: Nancy Hollmeier 630-482-1133	Batavia Public Library Wilson and Rt.31 Batavia, IL
Saturday March 31 10:00am	Brookfield Garden Club For more info contact: Jenny Jarosz, (708) 485-1962	Brookfield Public Library 3609 Grand Blvd. Brookfield, IL

Contact us at (708) 785-2943 for additional information or to schedule a show.



The Rain Garden Story

Right for Our Times

Ubiquitous Urbanization

...“as urban development proceeds, the land becomes covered with impervious surfaces -- like rooftops, roads and parking lots -- that don't allow rain water to penetrate the ground. Instead, it washes into the gutter and sewers of city streets, eventually ending up as surface water. Not only does increased runoff cause higher lake levels and flashier stream flows, but water quality declines because storm water picks up sediment and pollutants as it flows over the ground. Rain gardens provide one way to help counter these effects.”

Kenneth Potter

Rain Gardens to The Rescue!

Rain Gardens are beautiful. They are also right for our times and constitute the environmentally *smart* thing to do. These types of gardens involve landscaping that is not only attractive and unusual but healthy and necessary for the environment. A rain garden works like this: It redirects rain water from a downspout - perhaps diverting it through a streambed lined with smooth river rocks to resemble the bed of a running stream of water. This moves the water to a lower area which is planted with native species that thrive in wet soil such a Cardinal Flower, Blue Flag Iris, Fowl Mana Grass, assorted sedges, Swamp Milkweed, Marsh Blazing Star and the *ever so lovely* Marsh Marigold.

Storing Water - Saving Water

“Rain gardens help capture rainwater directed from roofs or other surfaces. When it rains, water initially pools in the garden's plant zone, percolating quickly from there into the permeable layer underneath. The permeable zone then stores water until it seeps into the subsoil. These type of gardens may improve water quality as well, capturing common contaminants such as excess nitrogen and phosphorus.”

Kenneth Potter

*Kenneth Potter is a Civil and
Environmental Engineering Professor
at the University of Wisconsin
Communication News@UW-Madison*

Publications & Associations

Art & Linda's In the News

"New Roots"--From the Golden State to the Prairie State by M.G. Berttuflo
Chicago Wilderness Magazine/Winter 2007

This article features a photo of the garden Art did in her parkway and one of Wolf Road Prairie. (Visit our website to view photos). A lovely article from the pages of Chicago Wilderness features a San Franciscan native, M.G. Berttuflo, who moved to the city of Chicago nine years ago. Immediately the writer sensed a loss of place along with a strong desire to connect somehow with wilderness. She missed the "rolling hills, summer grasses, poppies and dramatic sunsets over the bay and the mountains" in northern California. One day, by chance, she opened a copy of the magazine, Chicago Wilderness at a local grocery store. With great surprise she began to learn that there was, in fact, a wilderness around her with a beauty and diversity all its own. M.B. decided to bring this special Midwestern wilderness to her own door step, and as she explains, "With the help of prairie advocate Art Gara, my family replaced our own yard with native plant community and now, I feel connected to the Midwestern land." *Thank you, M.G.!*

"Wild For Natives", by Patricia Terry
Midwest Home Chicago/Spring 2006

This piece features photos by nature photographer, Carol Freeman, of Art and Linda's Riverwoods project. (Please visit the website to see these and more!) With lovely photographs and descriptions, Patricia Terry explains how native habitat gardens are becoming more and more attractive for gardeners and environmentalists alike. Among many excellent pointers, Terry illustrates how an established garden brings in many insect and bird species that might otherwise be lost in a particular geographical area. She goes on to say that while having enthusiasm for starting a such a garden is a vital first step, laying a strong foundation for that enthusiasm is frequently overlooked. experts in native gardening are quoted in order to point out the essentials in laying ground for your project. Among many specialists from the University of Illinois, the Morton Arboretum and The Chicago Botanic Garden, Terry also sought advice from Art and Linda's Wildflowers. Photos of one of our installations from a disturbed shaded area as well as info on the importance of choosing the right plants for the right soil are featured.

Thank you, Terry!

Website Update

www.artandlindaswildflowers.com

Thanks to our webmistress, Karen Green, the website continues to evolve every day and looks beautiful, just like our gardens! Over the winter, Karen added new graphics for your viewing pleasure. Note that we have now consolidated all of our garden and plant info into one menu heading called **"Our Gardens/Plants and Products"**

The submenu has expanded to include links to pages about bird baths containers and "features," as well as gardens for small spaces, stone work, school yards, composting and large public places. We continually expand your favorites: heavy clay and sun, shade, rain, prairie and butterfly gardens. All include many updated photos of our projects. We hope you will use them to inspire your new garden! Our **Guest Book** is still available. Here you will find a place to submit comments, questions, etc., to either Art, Linda or our webmistress. We enjoy your questions and responses to our site. If you provide an e-mail address, inquiries are handled promptly.

Creative Bird Baths by Art & Linda's

When creating a bird bath for our clients, we seek to incorporate the most unusual and interesting features we can find. We will work with you to fashion a wonderful, whimsical or simply elegant haven for birds to enjoy your garden and for you to enjoy the pleasure of watching them!

Some of the more unusual materials we have worked with include; old dolls, old birdhouses, levels of tree stumps topped with clay dishes, as well as traditional river stones and statuary. **We would love to see your photos and hear your comments on any of the bird bath "havens" we have made for you.. Send us your update!!!**

CALLING ALL OUR WONDERFUL GARDEN CLIENTS!!

**SHARE YOUR COMMENTS AND
PHOTOS OF YOUR NATIVE GARDENS**

Art and Linda's would be honored to share your wildflower gardens and comments with others - on our website and in our newsletters! If you have had a garden planted by us, and have taken color photographs and/or wish to share comments or testimonials, please consider sending these to Art at the address below. We can accept your original photo or a copy of your original photo, or digital photos on disk- but **please do not send anything via e-mail to our website!!!** (Some files may be too big and could cause downloading problems. If you must have your originals returned to you, please make a note on your submission and we will make every effort to do so.

Thank you!

**Art & Linda's Wildflowers
3730 S. 59th Avenue
Cicero, IL 60804**



Art & Linda's Wildflowers

3730 S. 59th Avenue
Cicero, IL 60804-4213

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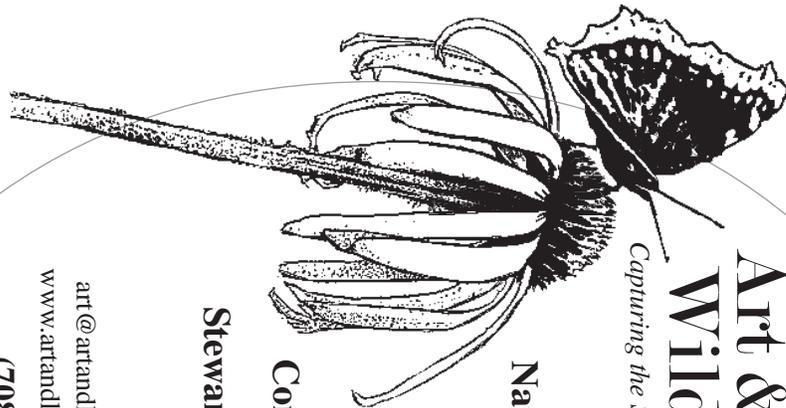
**TAKE 10%
OFF**



for more info be sure to visit:
artandlindaswildflowers.com.

See details inside!

To our valued customer:



Art & Linda's Wildflowers

Capturing the Spirit of the Natural World

Natural Landscaping

**Wildflower Garden
Design**

Installation

Consultation

Stewardship

art@artandlindaswildflowers.com
www.artandlindaswildflowers.com

(708) 785-2943