



# The Night Owl

Encouraging Conservation Around the Clock

Volume I, Issue I

the newsletter from Nature Wise, Inc.

April 2007

## WELCOME!

Welcome to the first issue of *The Night Owl*, the newsletter from Nature Wise, Inc. This newsletter will keep you informed of what Nature Wise, Inc. is doing to convince people to use our natural lands and resources sparingly and to take care of our wildlife.

### April 2007 Release of *Wildlife Matters: Florida Wildflowers*

Number eight in the *Wildlife Matters* series, this 30-minute television documentary highlights Florida's large wildflower population and its significance to Florida's biodiversity, regional identity and our quality of life. Viewers will experience the wildflowers of Florida, learn where to see them in the wild and discover how they can help ensure the survival of their populations. The public will also be informed on where to purchase Florida native wildflowers for use in landscapes.

Host Tracy McCommon interviews three Floridians who are actively involved in preserving this

important part of Florida's natural history. Paul Eisenbrown of the Florida Native Plant Society gives a monthly "What's Blooming" tour where he takes people out to see Florida wildflowers blooming in their native habitats. Tracy accompanies Paul on his tours at the Tosohatchee State Reserve in central Florida. Florida natives such as the **pine hyacinth**, the **hooded pitcher plant** and a variety of **milkweeds** are just a few of the beautiful blooms highlighted.

Dr. Walter Taylor, Professor of Biology at the University of Central Florida and author of two popular books on Florida wildflowers, talks to Tracy about his books and how each is designed to help the

reader identify wildflowers in the wild. He also introduces one of his favorite flowers, the **pine lily**.

The third guest is Nancy Bissett, owner of The Natives, Inc. and founder of upland restoration work in Florida. Nancy shows us how she hand collects seeds from such native wildflowers as the **blazing star**, **coreopsis** and **water dropwort**.

We learn about The Natives' mechanical seed collection methods and discover a variety of natives that can be purchased at her nursery in Davenport, Florida.



pine lily (*Lilium catesbaei*)

Tracy provides valuable tips on what viewers can do to help ease the threats facing Florida wildflowers. She sends a clear message that by protecting and restoring the natural lands on which our wildflowers grow and by planting native wildflowers in our landscapes, we can help ensure the survival of these important natural resources.

This program has been created in partnership with the State of Florida, Florida Wildflower Advisory Counsel and Florida Wildflower Foundation, Inc., with support from Orange County Environmental Protection Division.

### September 2007 Release of *Florida's Water... Wealth for our Future*

*Florida's Water...Wealth for Our Future* is a 30-minute television program promoting the awareness of water as a precious commodity and water conservation as a way of life, year round, for all Floridians. This program will provide a visual explanation of Florida's hydrologic cycle. Experts will be interviewed and information will be provided on the current condition of Florida's water supply, how it is threatened and why conservation is important to both humans and wildlife. Viewers will see examples of water conservation practices both inside and outside the home, and learn tips on water conservation which they can practice.

Partners in this program include the St. Johns River Water Management District, South Florida Water Management Districts, Orlando Utilities Commission, Orange County Utilities Water Division and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs. *Florida's Water...Wealth for Our Future* will be completed and distributed in September 2007.



pineland chaffhead (*Carphephorus carnosus*)

## Nature Wise, Inc.

### Improving the environment through educational television and video

#### WHO WE ARE

Nature Wise, Inc. exists to improve the environment in Florida through the production and dissemination of educational television programs and videos. These programs inform the public about environmental concerns and educate viewers on ways they can help make living conditions better for animals, plants and people. With tremendous population growth in Florida and extensive destruction of natural ecosystems, attention must be focused on environmental conservation and preservation of our natural resources and wildlife habitat before it's too late.

#### THE NEED

Since the widespread settlement of Florida in the mid-1800s, at least 19 species of animals and 12 species of plants have become extinct. In addition, 117 other animal species are currently endangered, threatened or listed as species of special concern and 413 native plant species are endangered, threatened or commercially exploited.

Florida's rapid growth is taking its toll on our native wildlife and on the preservation of our remaining native ecosystems and natural land. Studies show 50,000 acres of wildlife habitat are destroyed each year

in Florida for development. Habitat loss to development is the largest threat facing our native wildlife today.



Sherman's fox squirrel (*Sciurus niger*)

The US Census Bureau projects Florida will gain more than 12 million people over the next 25 years, making Florida the third fastest growing state behind Nevada and Arizona. With Florida's current population of almost 18 million people, that's a 67% increase in Florida's population over the next 25 years.

Studies show 4 out of 5 Floridians feel this increase is a problem—59% consider this a “very serious problem.”

If we allow this growth—and the subsequent extinction of Florida's native flora and fauna—we will not only lose an invaluable part of our natural heritage, we will also lose the opportunity to experience a true “quality of life” here in Florida. Uncontrolled development

compromises our wildlife and adversely affects humans; it leads to increasingly congested traffic, fewer options for outdoor recreation, elevated stress levels among residents and higher taxes.

History shows that past civilizations have collapsed when they exceeded the limits of their natural environment. It is our responsibility to be

good stewards of the environment and do everything we can to prevent this from happening in the United States. We must make our dominion of the

land “self-sustaining” and not “self-destructive.”

#### OUR ANSWER AND STRATEGIC RESPONSE

Fortunately, people today care more than ever about the environment and are willing to act. They simply need to be made aware of the concerns and empowered with the information they need to alter those actions which are harmful to the environment.

Perhaps the most enduring and effective conservation investment we can make is EDUCATION. With the power to transform information into insight and awareness into action, conservation education is vital to our bountiful lifestyle here in Florida.



white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

Nature Wise, Inc. is committed to helping Florida residents understand the issues facing our environment—people conserve what they understand. We are

dedicated to showing Florida residents the value of our natural lands and native wildlife—people conserve what they value—as well as explaining the impact our native ecosystems have on their quality of life in Florida—people conserve what influences their lives.

Our programming informs the public about environmental concerns and educates viewers on ways they can help make living conditions better for animals, plants and people.

By empowering Floridians with environmental awareness, we can utilize their help in helping to solve our preservation issues and growth pressures.



red-bellied woodpecker (*Melanerpes carolinus*)

## Nature Wise, Inc. Distribution

The television programs produced and distributed by Nature Wise, Inc. target people of all ages and demographics.

Programs are distributed throughout Florida to over 60 government access and educational television channels, reaching a viewing audience of almost 15 million people. Programs are also distributed via satellite by the Florida Knowledge Network to all of Florida's 3,400 public schools and to all of Florida's 13 PBS television stations.

Programs are aired an average of four times per week for several months at a time. Because the programs are not-dated—or "evergreen"—stations can air

the programs any number of times for years to come.

Nature Wise, Inc. programs are also made available to Florida schools and libraries and other educational entities through the numerous school board and educational channels that broadcast and distribute the programs.

If you represent a television station and would like to air the programs free of charge, please contact Nature Wise, Inc. at 407-579-7989 or e-mail Tracy McCommon at [positivetracy@bellsouth.net](mailto:positivetracy@bellsouth.net).

## Make a Donation

Nature Wise, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. We depend on donations from individuals, businesses and corporations as well as grant monies from the government and foundations to sustain our mission of "improving the environment through educational television and video."

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please make your check payable to Nature Wise, Inc. and mail it to:

Nature Wise, Inc.  
PO Box 560277  
Orlando, FL 32856-0277

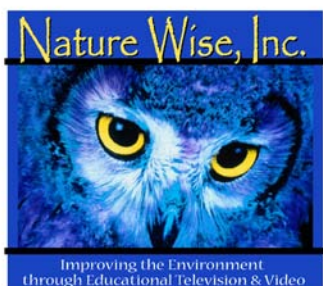
For additional information on making a donation or for corporate sponsorship opportunities, please contact Tracy McCommon at 407-579-7989 or [positivetracy@bellsouth.net](mailto:positivetracy@bellsouth.net).

## Ordering Nature Wise, Inc. Programs

If you would like to order a Nature Wise, Inc. television program, please select from the list below and specify which format you prefer. (You can view a segment of the program before you order by going to the "TV Program Samples" link on the Nature Wise, Inc. website at [www.naturewisetv.org](http://www.naturewisetv.org).)

Programs are available for \$19.95 (which includes shipping and handling).

Complimentary copies are available to television stations interested in broadcasting the program.



Quantity	Title	Format
_____	Restoring Florida's Lakeshores with Aquascaping	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Audubon Center for Birds of Prey	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Preserving Large Tracts of Land	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Creating a Backyard Habitat	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Balancing Conservation & Development	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Florida Ecosystems and their Endangered Animals	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Unique Landscapes Using Florida Native Plants	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Successful Gardens Inspired By Nature	DVD or VHS
_____	Wildlife Matters: Florida Wildflowers	DVD or VHS

Mail this form with your check to:  
**Nature Wise, Inc.**  
**PO Box 560277**  
**Orlando, FL 32856-0277**

Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

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## Meet Tracy McCommon

Tracy McCommon, host of the *Wildlife Matters* series, is President and Founder of Nature Wise, Inc. Tracy holds two degrees, a BA in Psychology with a background in Advertising from Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania and a BA in Radio and Television Communications from the University of Central Florida.

Tracy has worked both in radio and television in Orlando, Florida. In 1992, she worked as a secretary at WAHL 1190 AM, a Christian radio station, while finishing her BA at UCF. She quickly worked her way up to Operations Manager and Production Director.

Tracy's television career began at WFTV-9 as an assistant in the newsroom's "Action Office." She later worked at WMFE-24, an Orlando-based PBS station, where she eventually became a producer. She then moved to Orange TV-9, Orange County's local government access station, where she hosted and produced her own TV program, *Pet Chat*,

a show designed to help citizens become better pet owners.

In 2002, Tracy began hosting and producing the *Wildlife Matters* series as a freelancer with her company Positive Productions, working in partnership with Orange TV. In January of 2006, she founded the non-profit organization Nature Wise, Inc. which took over production of the *Wildlife Matters* series in order to secure additional funding sources, improve program distribution and insure uninterrupted production of the programs. Through Nature Wise, Inc., Tracy is also able to work on other conservation documentaries and distribute them throughout Florida.

Tracy has always had a strong passion for conservation of our natural resources and the preservation and protection of



native wildlife. She believes that since animals can not speak for themselves, they need advocates to help understand them, preserve them and stand up for their protection.

The protection of wildlife and our natural environment is why Tracy got into television production in the first place—to help

those who need a voice. Through the *Wildlife Matters* series, she is now able to serve not only wildlife populations but human populations as well.

Tracy hopes all who visit the Nature Wise, Inc. website, who see the *Wildlife Matters* and other Nature Wise, Inc. television programs and conservation documentaries, and who read this newsletter will be inspired to get involved in helping to preserve our native Florida.



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Nature Wise, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

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