



The Night Owl

Encouraging Conservation Around the Clock

Volume 3, Issue 1

the newsletter from Nature Wise, Inc.

Summer 2010

New TV Program JUST RELEASED:

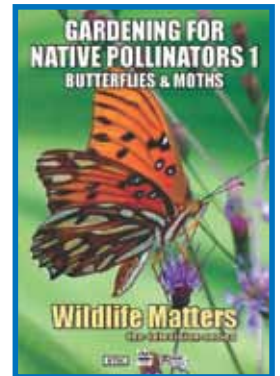
Gardening for Native Pollinators I: Butterflies & Moths

Next time you're tempted to stomp on an insect or swat at a bee, think twice. These pesky little creatures are truly marvels of nature — contributing billions of dollars each year to America's economy in cultivated crops and keeping native wildflower seed formation "birthrates" strong. Strangely, pollinators are disappearing around the globe, and scientists are not sure why. Even now, various species face the imminent risk of extinction.

Delve with us into the world of native pollination and learn about Gardening for Native Pollinators (Part I) Butterflies and Moths (JUST RELEASED); and (Part II) Bees and Other Insects (coming this fall). Discover how pollinators contribute to at least 1/3 of the food produced in the United States, including our wonderful fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and even fibers, and how 90% of native flowering plants rely exclusively on native pollinators for reproduction. Find out what factors are contributing to pollinator demise, and learn how you

can create a pollinator-friendly habitat in your yard and help keep our world going round on its reproductive cycle.

Nature Wise has provided this TV program to air "free of charge" to our 70 government access, education and community channel partners throughout Florida and additionally to the Florida Knowledge Network for distribution via satellite to 13 Florida PBS "ED" channels and 2.5 million students K-12.



To order a DVD copy of *Gardening for Native Pollinators* or any of our 12 half-hour TV programs in the "Wildlife Matters" series, please visit our website at www.naturewisetv.org.

A Message From Tracy

Just wanted to catch everyone up on what's going on with Nature Wise. Since the new release of the *Gardening for Native Pollinators I: Butterflies & Moths* TV program and video, I have begun getting out and introducing the show to people throughout our area.

On June 24th, I spoke to the Seminole County Master Gardeners about the importance of our native pollinators, their varieties and what gardeners can do in their yards to help their populations. Then I showed the TV program. The crowd was thrilled with the video and full of questions. They had a "record crowd" in the history of their club.

On June 27th I attended the Wekiwa Springs State Park "Pollinator Awareness Event" and Nature Wise had a table promoting pollinator appreciation and featuring our latest TV program *Gardening for Native Pollinators I: Butterflies & Moths*. We educated people about native pollinators and gave out almost 40 entry forms for our "Art with a Purpose" Children's Art Contest to enthusiastic children. The park was packed with almost 300 people enjoying nature and swimming in the 73 degree Wekiwa Spring. Future speaking

engagements where I will be showcasing the *Gardening for Native Pollinators I: Butterflies & Moths* TV program and video include:

July 14th: Osceola County Master Gardeners (12 noon at Osceola Heritage Park)

Aug. 19th: Osceola Eagles 4-H Club (10am the Poinciana Community Center)

Sept. 12th: Seminole County Audubon Society (2pm at the Sanford Library)

Sept 16th: Osceola County Florida Native Plant Society (6:30pm at the First United Methodist Church of Kissimmee)

Oct. 5th: Orange County Florida Native Plant Society (6:30pm at Leu Gardens in Orlando)

Dec. 13th: Seminole County Florida Native Plant Society (6:30pm Environmental Studies Center in Longwood)

Hope you can make it to one of these events. Or if you would like to contact me about presenting at one of your club

meetings, please call 407-579-7989 or e-mail positivetracy@bellsouth.net.

One more exciting thing I'd like to tell you about is our 2011 Children's Art Contest called "Art with a Purpose." This outreach

is to encourage children from 1-18 years old to develop an appreciation for the nature in Florida and depict that in a piece of artwork which they create. No non-native wildlife or traces of human beings are allowed in the art. Winners in each age category will receive their award at our first Annual Awards Banquet on February 19th, 2011. Visit our website for more details and to get a contest entry form.



Enjoy the newsletter. And I encourage you to get out and get involved in protecting our wildlife and enjoying the earth's natural resources.

Tracy McCommon
Nature Wise President / CEO

Upcoming Program: Save Space for the Gopher Tortoise

Coming in 2011 you won't want to miss *Save Space for the Gopher Tortoise*, a 30-minute television documentary in the "Wildlife Matters" series highlighting this endearing yet somewhat



gopher tortoise

mysterious creature found only in the southeastern part of the United States.

At one time at least 23 species of tortoises existed in North America, but today only four remain — one being the Gopher Tortoise. These unique creatures make their dwellings by digging burrows up to 40 feet long and 10 feet deep, affording protection from predators and inclement weather. Their temperate underground homes also support at least 350 other listed species, making the Gopher Tortoise a keystone species.

Previously 16,000 Gopher Tortoises in Florida per year were being entombed (buried to death) due to development, which resulted in Florida's relisting of the Gopher Tortoise from "special concern" to a "threatened species." In response, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission recently approved the new Gopher Tortoise Management Plan dedicated to relocating 16,000 Gopher Tortoise

per year from development sites to undeveloped land where they can live. However, this plan will not work apart from a united effort between local governments,

state and federal agencies, private landowners and—the general public to find and manage undeveloped land for these relocated Gopher Tortoise!

Join us as we explore the world of the Gopher Tortoise. Become familiar with their specific characteristics and habitats, and learn how you can get involved in helping to relocate Gopher Tortoises and ensure their survival in the 21st century.

NatureWise is still seeking funding for this program. If you can help, please donate online at www.naturewisetv.org. or call 407-579-7989.

Nature Wise Receives Awards



Tracy McCommon, President and Founder of Nature Wise, Inc., was recently awarded a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Congressman Alan Grayson, 8th District of Florida for her accomplishments through Nature Wise of raising environmental awareness throughout Florida.

Current Gopher Tortoise Listings	
Florida	Threatened
Georgia	Threatened
Louisiana	Threatened
South Carolina	Endangered
Mississippi	Endangered
Alabama	Endangered

2011 Nature Wise "Defenders of the Environment" Awards Gala

Coming in February of 2011...a celebration of those of you who are doing a great job as a "Defender of the Environment."

- Social reception/entertainment
- Nature Wise "Art with a Purpose" Children's Art Contest winners announced
- Nature Wise "Environmentalist of the Year" award presented (in recognition of a lifetime achievement of preserving, defending and protecting the environment)
- Nature Wise "Defenders of the Environment" awards presented
- Dinner banquet

Visit the nature wise website for entry and registration forms at www.naturewisetv.org

BEE-AWARE!

If you've seen one bee you've seen them all, right? Not true. Nearly 20,000 species of native bees fill the world and vary according to their markings, behavior, social traits and nesting places. Scientists believe at least 5,000 distinct species of native bees exist in the United States alone; at least 200 native species occupy Florida. See if you recognize any of the following local native pollinator bees.



carpenter bee on waterwillow

CARPENTER BEES look similar to bumblebees but have shiny abdomens without much hair unlike the bumble bee's hairy black abdomen. The females are equipped with strong jaws enabling them to bore through solid wood with the precision of

a drill. They make their homes, or burrows, in dead trees and timber, often taking up with several families of bees. Males typically guard the nests with an

apparent vengeance, yet they are unable to sting, while the females, who are unlikely to sting, come and go from the nest with heaps of nectar and pollen.

collect pollen on their abdomens rather than on their hind legs. An underside abdomen packed with pollen is an easy way to identify a Leaf-Cutter Bee. Typically they sting only when aggravated.



green metallic bee on blanketflower

GREEN METALLIC BEES are one of the larger native bees in Florida, sometimes reaching 1/2 inch in length. Known for their bright green metallic head and/or body, they commonly nest in deep burrows in the soil. Some males have black and yellow stripes on their abdomen where females are all green. Green Metallic Bees visit a great

assortment of native wildflowers gathering both nectar and pollen.

BUMBLE BEES are large, fuzzy bees and are characterized by their black and yellow bands of color. They are very essential pollinators of wildflowers in Florida and become loyal to particular wildflowers. They have long tongues perfect for sucking nectar from tubular



bumble bee on goldenaster

wildflowers. Bumble bees live in colonies often dwelling in deserted holes in the ground such as abandoned animal burrows. When not near their nest Bumble Bees are not aggressive.

LEAF-CUTTER BEES

have scissor-like mandibles and derive their name from cutting circular pieces out of plant leaves to line their nests. Small and hairy, they are solitary bees and differ from others in that they

HONEYBEES are not native to the USA (brought from Europe in colonial times) but are important pollinators of our food crops. They are small and generally black with a brownish-yellow center. Honey bees are extremely social in nature. Workers collect nectar from flowers and make honey; their stings are barbed and cannot be withdrawn. You'll find honeybees living in hives called "honey combs."

Nature Wise launches "Friends of Nature Wise" Founders Society

Nature Wise is both pleased and proud to announce that our "Wildlife Matters" series is going nationally on PBS. We are so excited about not only increasing our distribution but also about producing new programming.

To that end, we are launching a "Friends of Nature Wise" Founders Society. We are looking for 250 "Protectors of the Environment" to make a donation of \$250 to help us finance additional production costs. To become a Founding Member of the Friends of Nature Wise Society visit our website at www.naturewisetv.org and click on the DONATON tab to make your \$250 donation. For more information call us at 407-579-7989. Can we count on your support?



Make a Difference — Make a DONATION

When you hear about the perils of various wildlife that are suffering to the point of extinction or about a serious environmental catastrophe such as the Gulf Oil Disaster you don't have to feel helpless. Here are some things you can do to make a difference.

1. Cut back on your oil and energy use. Live more modestly.
2. Give a portion of your income to environmental nonprofits that are working to make things better.
3. Volunteer your time with environmental groups. A little bit of your time can go a long way.
4. Write letters to governmental officials expressing your dissatisfaction and giving ideas for improvement.
5. Do whatever you can around your home and in your yard to help wildlife.
6. Make your tax deductible donation to Nature Wise, Inc. on-line at: www.naturewisetv.org under the "Donate" tab.



How would you like to be a part of the Nature Wise Team?

We need volunteers to help us in the office, on special fund raising projects and as production assistants.

Come join us and help us protect and defend our precious environment. No special skills required — just a positive attitude and a commitment to our mission statement!

Call Tracy at 407-579-7989 or email us at positivetracy@bellsouth.net.



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