

A lush garden scene featuring a wooden bench in the center, surrounded by numerous yellow flowers and green foliage. In the background, a blue house is partially visible through the trees.

**NOT your grandmother's pollinator garden:
Expanding your aesthetics and deepening your curiosity
to make your yard a wildlife haven**

Welcome to Faux Snag Prairie and
Oak Savanna Homegrown National Park

To Make a Prairie Emily Dickinson #1755

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee.
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.

Per Doug Tallamy, “native” is a term that de
longevity, in a geographical location. For ex
supports 170 insect species in Europe, after
only supports five species.



Do we need any pollen?

Approximate dimensions:

plot: 12,725 sq ft

house/porch: ~900 sq ft + garage: ~242 +
veg garden, paths, stoop, driveway, etc.: ~50 sq ft
= ~11,500 sq ft



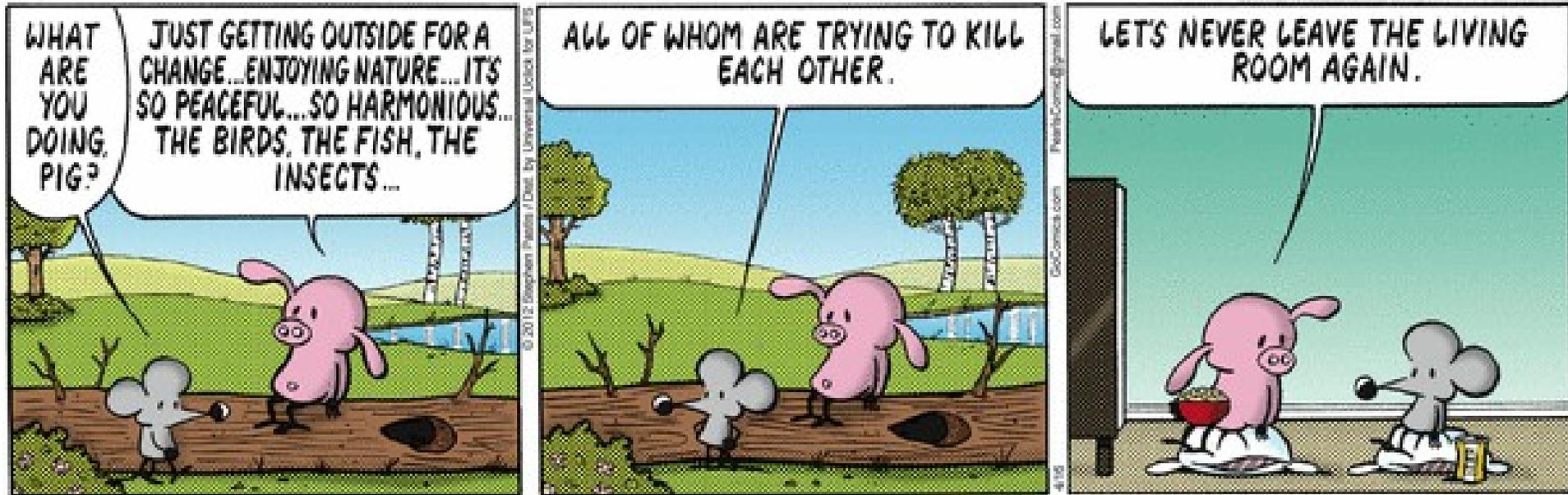
Photo from 2023



MY Conditions

- time
- interest
- financial security
- own house/car
- energy/stamina
- openmindedness
- curiosity
- no competing opinions (that I care about)
- and

...enjoyment of nature!



How I started:

- *let everything grow (neighbor called city)
- *started smothering with cardboard weighted by “stuff” (see above)
- *initial killing of grass by rototill, sodcutting
- *subsequent smothering using tarps/carpets/cardboard/etc.

Various means to spread plants:

- *seed sowing
- *transplanting
- *interplanting/seeding on narrow strips
- *allowing volunteers (aka neglect) - especially from prairie into terrace area

Down the garden path(s)



To the eponymous
Faux Snag (RIP)



“Clean” slate...

After breaking down big stalks and mowing the rest.



Challenges: vary depending on location and individual's tolerance level

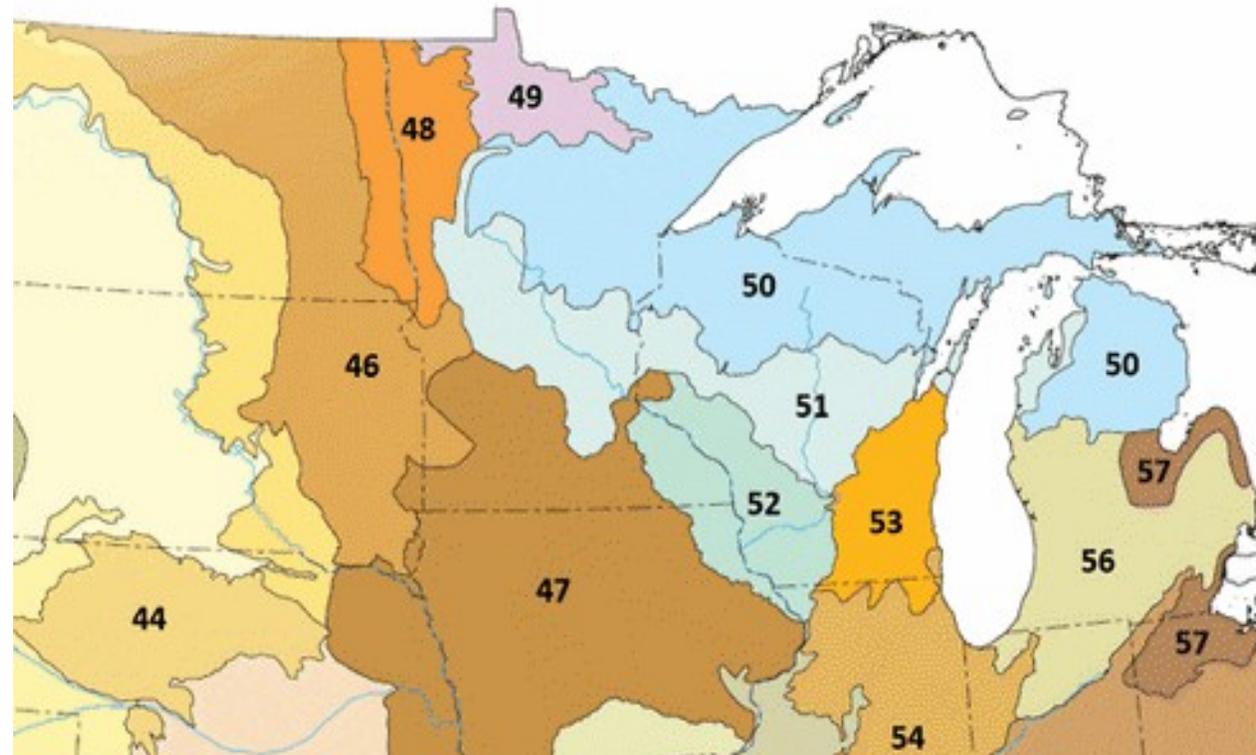
Can include: neighbors, HOAs, ordinances, critters, ignorance/mistakes, time, force majeure, spouses

Madison had overly specific ordinances re native plantings, but now:

27.05(2)(f) Landscaping, plantings, soil and other decorative surface treatments, including intentionally planted native vegetation or non-native grasses, shall be installed **if necessary** (like in area where there is bare soil and creating erosion) and maintained to present a **safe condition** (like in situation where vegetation is obstructing a public sidewalk) and **well-maintained appearance** (like in a vacant property where nobody is maintaining yards during the whole growing season) in all court, yard, and terrace areas. Except for plantings in terraces as allowed by Sec. 10.25, and except for natural areas in City parks, **all lawns, lawn areas, and terraces, including grasses and vegetation not intentionally planted in-whole or in-part**, (like unattended yards) shall be maintained so as not to exceed eight (8) inches in height.

Ecoregions may be identified by similarities in geology, physiography, vegetation, climate, soils, land use, wildlife distributions, and hydrology.

We're in Ecoregion 53c, Southeastern Wisconsin Savannah and Till Plain. The potential natural vegetation of this region is transitional with a mosaic of sugar maple, basswood, and oak to the east and an increasing amount of white, black, and bur oak, oak savanna, prairie, and sedge meadows toward the west.



Some planning considerations:

- available space, contours
- current situation: plants, fences, walls, etc.
- how much time/\$\$ to spend
- plant height/aggressiveness (spread)
- goals – attracting birds, pollinators, other critters, pissing off neighbors
- sense of aesthetics
- shade/sun, moisture, sometimes soil quality
- regulations, ordinances, terrace area

Why (additionally) my yard is laid out as it is:

- serendipity and whim (and ignorance/laziness)
- functionality: petanque court, brush piles, compost bins, paths, ponds
- filling a gap, accessibility, working with what's available, cost

Some critters that have visited



or set up shop



Others that
have not

REBEL INSECTS

offthemark.com

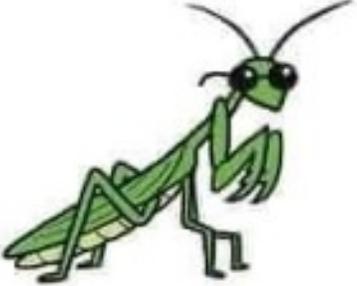
Get a signed print: otmCartoon@gmail.com



BUTTERFLY THAT
PREFERS MARGARINE



CARPENTER ANT
THAT'S A PLUMBER



PRAYING MANTIS
THAT'S AN ATHEIST



YELLOWJACKET IN
A PURPLE SWEATER

©2022 Mark Parisi Dist by Andrews McMeel 2-1

MARK PARISI

Signs of mammals



Some Resources (Info on plants' needs/benefits can be found in a variety of publications/websites, too much to go into here.)

[A Volunteer's Guide to Growing Native Plants](http://lwr.d.countyofdane.com/documents/pdfs/Free-Native-Plants/How-to-guide-2019.pdf) lwr.d.countyofdane.com/documents/pdfs/Free-Native-Plants/How-to-guide-2019.pdf

[Wisconsin Native Plants: Recommendations for Landscaping and Natural Community Restoration](http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/endangeredresources/nativeplants) dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/endangeredresources/nativeplants

[Plant Native Plants to Help Nature](http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/endangeredresources/nativeplants) dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/endangeredresources/nativeplants

[Native Plants for the Small Yard](http://lgnc.org/pdfdocs/brandes_book.pdf) lgnc.org/pdfdocs/brandes_book.pdf

[Prairie Seedling and Seeding Evaluation Guide](http://publications.iowa.gov/43148/1/PrairieSeedlingGuide.pdf)

publications.iowa.gov/43148/1/PrairieSeedlingGuide.pdf

[Central Region Seedling ID Guide for Native Prairie Plants](http://nrcspad.sc.egov.usda.gov/DistributionCenter/product.aspx?ProductID=1681)

nrcspad.sc.egov.usda.gov/DistributionCenter/product.aspx?ProductID=1681

[Planning and Designing Your Home Landscape](http://www3.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Documents/ecology/shoreland/landscaping/g1923_planning_designing_home_landscape.pdf)

www3.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Documents/ecology/shoreland/landscaping/g1923_planning_designing_home_landscape.pdf

Monarch Gardens monarchgard.com

Audubon Society www.audubon.org/native-plants

Homegrown National Park homegrownnationalpark.org

Wild Ones wildones.org

Flora of WI wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu

Garden maintenance and management depends on many things, e.g.,

- * time availability
- * need
- * how anal-retentive
- * strength/stamina
- * interest
- * conflicting interests
- * how many kids you have

Seed/plant sources:

groups, in-person/online swaps, the field,
nurseries, self, friends, libraries

**There is NO excuse for not getting free
seeds/plants!**

*Caveats: beware of jumping worms and
invasive roots, as well as claims of nativity*

Mostly Madison Area Native Plant Sources

Good Oak Ecological Services in Madison provides native landscaping, ecological consulting and natural areas management services and retails plants (www.goodoakllc.com)

UW Arboretum Annual Native Plant Sale has a wide selection. (uwarboretum.org/foa/native_plant_sale.php)

Bluestem Farm in Baraboo has many species of woodland and prairie not available from larger growers (www.bluestemfarm.com)

Woods Edge Farm in Muscoda has a good selection of prairie and woodland species. (www.woodsedgefarm.com)

Prairie Nursery in Westfield has a good selection of prairie species and a few savanna species as well (prairienursery.com)

Johnson's Nursery in Menomonee Falls is a source for native trees and shrubs and has forbs in larger containers (www.johnsonsnursery.com)

Oak Prairie Farm in Pardeeville has a variety of prairie and wetland plants and seeds as well as ferns that are not available from other nurseries (www.oakprairiefarm.com)

Reeseville Ridge Nursery has selection of native trees and shrubs (www.wegrowit.com/Reeseville/ReesevilleRidgeCatalog.htm)

Taylor Creek Nursery in Brodhead offers prairie, savanna, and wetland plants (www.appliedeco.com/tcrn)

Prairie Frontier in Waukesha sells native wildflower and grass seed (www.prairiefrontier.com)

Agricol SE of Janesville offers a variety of native prairie and savanna species (www.agrecol.com)

Plant Dane annual sale (www.ripple-effects.com/Plant-Dane)

Greenline Synergy has pre-vegetated blankets of rooted plants (greenlinesynergy.net)

Prairie Fairy Native Plants has plants native to Dane County (prairiefairymadison.com)

Related issues

- leaving the leaves (and stalks)
- water retention (e.g., raingardens/swales)
- attracting more than pollinators
- minimizing artificial light/noise

Things to incorporate

Snags – natural and man-made

Brush and compost piles

Rain gardens

Logs/stumps/perches/runs

Ponds/Bird baths/Insect watering hole

Bird houses; Bee "houses"; Bat house

Dry soil for dust bathing; bare ground for native bee nesting

Mud for wasps/bees

Permeable drive/walkways

Rainwater collection containers

Conifers/evergreens: important for bird cover in winter

Reptile hibernaculum (used mostly by chipmunks and voles to date)



Where cicada noise really comes from





*Civilized yards
are all alike.
Every wild yard
is wild in its own
way.*

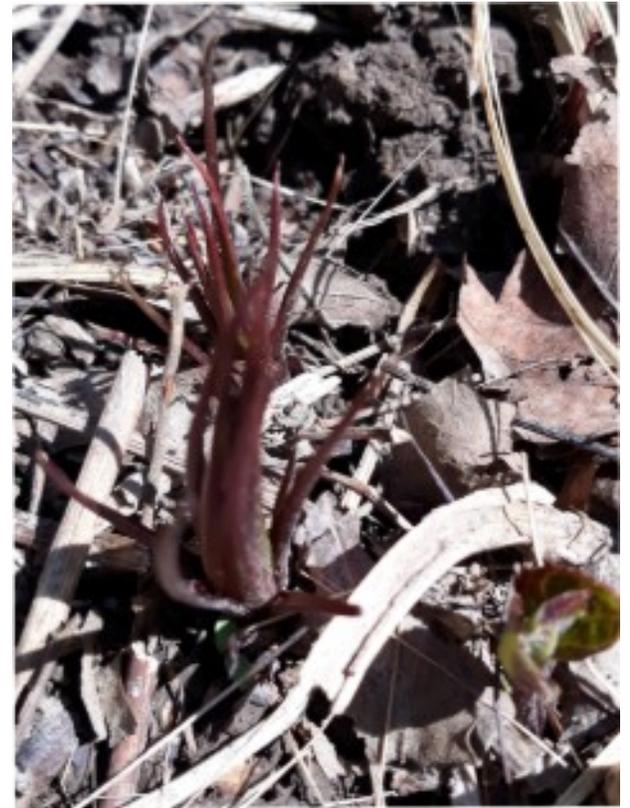
The Overstory
Richard Powers

Pleasant surprises





Unpleasant surprises



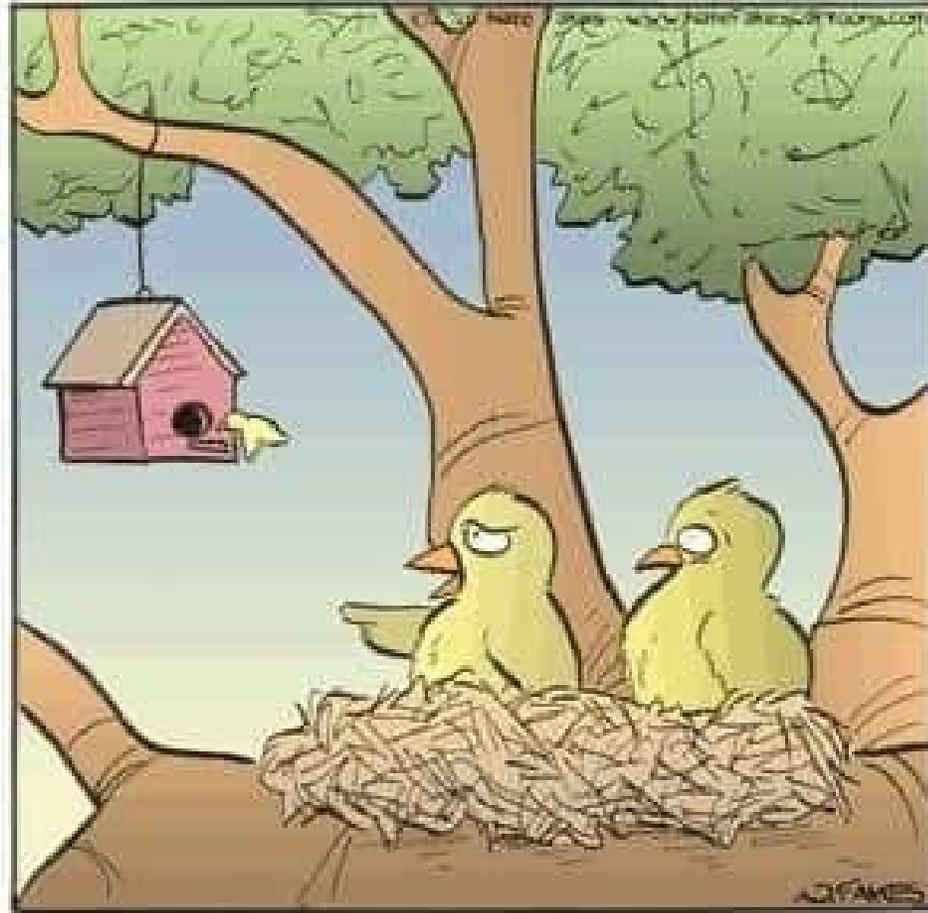
“Man-made” shelters



“Natural” shelters



It can be a fine
balance



"That could've been ours.
But nooooo...You and your DIY!"

Here and There



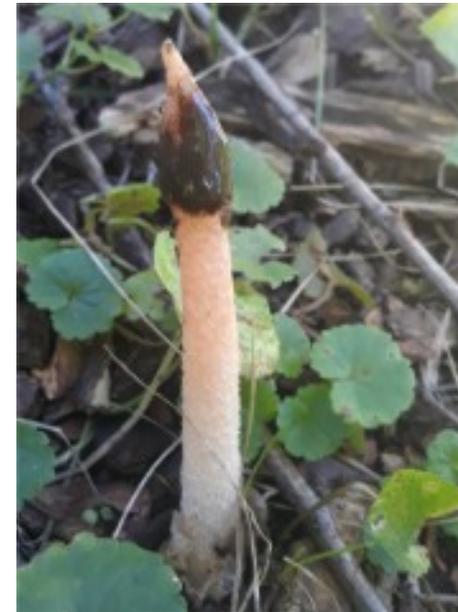
The power of plants



DON'T FORGET THE FUNGI



Types of Mushrooms



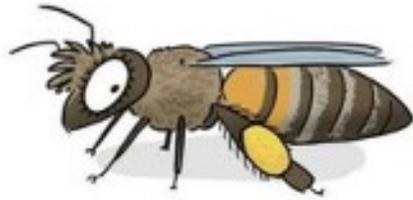
Pretty things





More purty things

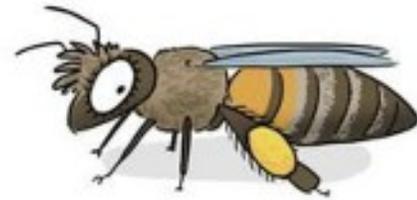
BEEES



what farmers think we are



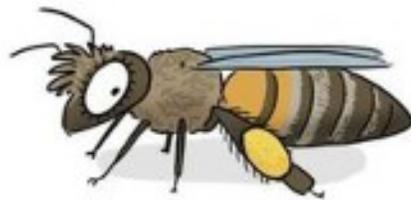
what children think we are



what beekeepers think we are



what the public think we are



what Google thinks we are



what we actually are

And yes, bees “do” it



The old prairie lived by the diversity of its plants and animals, all of which were useful because the sum total of their co-operations and competitions achieved continuity.

A Sand County Almanac Aldo Leopold



I hope that I've sown
some seeds of interest
and action here today.

"Anyone who thinks gardening begins in the spring and ends in the fall is missing the best part of the whole year; for gardening begins in January with the dream." in The Country Garden by Josephine

Nuese

Some Considerations When Planning the Plot

- existing vegetation: what to keep, change
- location of windows/doors/patios, paths, fences, power/utility lines, AC unit, water faucet, etc.
- aesthetics
- uses
- levels: vines, shrubs, trees, ground cover, etc.
- hardscaping to add
- soil
- water flow
- wind direction/strength
- topography