

PRESENTATIONS

The following is a selection of slide presentations and workshops offered by Heather McCargo, WSP Executive Director. These programs include inspiring talks and visuals of native plants, as well as hands-on learning in garden and landscape settings. Please see Page 2 for presentation rates.

Understanding the Fascinating Life Cycles of Native Plants

Flowering, pollinators, and seed dispersal

In this presentation, Heather showcases the fascinating reproductive life cycles of different plants native to New England, and explains how we can change our landscaping practices to support wild plants, their pollinators, and other wildlife. She then describes simple outdoor seed sowing methods that anyone can do to help increase native plant populations. This practice is a great way to protect the genetic diversity of our native flora and produces an abundance of plants inexpensively. Be part of a grassroots movement to sow native seeds!

Why Native Plants Matter

Beauty, biodiversity, and resilience

Native plants are beautiful, important for our local and regional ecosystems, and do not need the high nutrient and water inputs of commonly cultivated plants. These qualities make native plant species excellent additions to our gardens! In this presentation, Heather covers the many reasons we all should care about our region's native flora and the importance of bringing these native plants back into our gardens and developed landscapes. She also discusses current native plant trends and issues in the nursery trade (including cloning and the loss of genetic diversity), and explains how we all can support our native flora by planting seed-grown native plants.

In the Shade

Gardening with native plants from the woodland understory

Many gardeners are unsure of what to plant in the shade. In this presentation, Heather looks to natural woodlands for garden design inspiration, then discusses the many beautiful woody and herbaceous natives that thrive in the shade of our forests and can be planted in our gardens and home landscapes.

SEASONAL FIELD TRIPS AND WORKSHOPS

Native Plant Walk (Woodlands or meadows in spring, summer, and early fall)

Woodlands and meadows are full of exciting native plants, each with a story about landscape history. On this walk, Heather highlights the surprising diversity of species native to Maine, including delicate spring wildflowers, ferns, and a variety of shrubs and trees. She then identifies species adaptable to gardens and developed landscapes, those with edible and medicinal properties, and species with unusual reproductive strategies, all while discussing the threats to their survival. Learning to recognize native species in our midst is the first step toward advocating for their conservation.

Native Seed Sowing (Fall and winter)

Join Heather for a hands-on experience in native plant propagation! Working with wildflowers, ferns, shrubs, and trees, Heather discusses ecologically-responsible seed collection and storing procedures, to germination techniques with an emphasis on outdoor seed sowing in pots or growing beds. Be prepared to dig your hands deep into the diversity of native seeds! Participants will go home with several pots sown with native seeds.

PRESENTATION RATES

In Maine: Each program is \$350 plus round-trip mileage from Portland.

Out of State: Each program is \$500 plus round-trip mileage from Portland.

MORE ABOUT WILD SEED PROJECT

Wild Seed Project is a Maine-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that works to increase the use of native plants in all landscape settings in order to conserve biodiversity, encourage plant adaptation in the face of climate change, safeguard wildlife habitat, and create pollination and migration corridors for insects and birds. We sell seeds of locally-grown native plants and educate the public on seed sowing so that a wide range of citizens can participate in increasing native plant populations. Visit us at wildseedproject.net and check out our annual magazine, *Wild Seed*.

Heather McCargo, founder and Executive Director of Wild Seed Project, is an educator with 30 years of expertise in plant propagation, landscape design, and conservation. She was the head plant propagator at the New England Wildflower Society's Garden in the Woods during the 1990s, worked at several landscape architecture and planning firms specializing in ecological design, and has been a contributor to several research projects with USAID, the National Gardening Association, and MOFGA. She has lectured nationally and is widely published in journals and magazines such as *Horticulture* and *American Nurseryman*. Locally, Heather designed the master plan for the medicinal gardens at Avena Botanicals in Rockland and was the creator and lead teacher for the Bay School's Agricultural Arts program. Heather has a B.A. in plant ecology from Hampshire College, and a M.A. from the Conway School of Landscape Design.