

## Walks, Talks and Workshops with Wild Seed Project

Wild Seed Project founder Heather McCargo and program manager Anna Fialkoff offer a selection of walks, talks and workshops, including inspiring presentations and visuals of native plants, as well as hands-on learning in garden and landscape settings. Many of the talks can be presented virtually.

Interested in hosting us? Please review the walks, talks and workshops below, then fill out our [Event Inquiry form at https://wildseedproject.net/host-events](https://wildseedproject.net/host-events). Once we review your inquiry, we'll be in touch to discuss logistics.

Keep in mind that our schedule often fills up months in advance, so it's best to book early.

Please ask us about our instructor fees and travel reimbursement. All proceeds support Wild Seed Project's work.

### TALKS

#### Understanding the Fascinating Life Cycles of Native Plants (Heather)

##### *Flowering, pollinators and seed dispersal*

In this presentation, Heather showcases the fascinating reproductive life cycles of various plants native to New England and explains how we can change our landscaping practices to support wild plants and the pollinators and other wildlife that depend on them.

Heather 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 (Heather)

##### *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!

Heather covers the many reasons we all should care about our region's native flora and the importance of bringing 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 (Heather)

##### *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 and 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.

### **Gardening for Habitat (Anna)**

#### *How to balance beauty, wildlife value and your garden workload*

Gardens are habitats, but the degree to which they support local wildlife depends on how we plant and manage them. Our plant choices determine who visits, stays or passes by as creatures look for food, shelter, to nest and lay eggs. When and how we decide to clean up leaves or cut plants back affects life cycles of salamanders, bees, birds, moths and butterflies. Learn how to create habitat in the garden year-round while balancing your workload and garden aesthetics.

### **Diversify Your Lawn (Anna)**

#### *Transforming your lawn into a rich tapestry of native plants*

Who says lawns need to be monocultures or made only of grasses? We can do better than the default landscape material that covers most of the suburban landscape. Discover how to diversify your lawn, transition it to meadow or convert it to layers of native plants to create a rich, wildlife-friendly tapestry.

### **Rewild in 10 Action Steps (Anna)**

#### *Making positive environmental change in your own neighborhood*

Entomologist Douglas Tallamy identifies a minimum of 70% native plant biomass in our landscapes needed to safeguard wildlife habitat, support biodiversity and mitigate the effects of climate change.

In the fall of 2020 Wild Seed Project launched an initiative that motivates people to meet this threshold through a holistic approach — it is called rewilding, and anyone can do it, whether you have farmland, a yard in the suburbs, a hell strip in an urban neighborhood or no land of your own. Anna will walk you through what it means to rewild in 10 action steps.

### **Sponge Landscapes (Anna)**

#### *Absorbing rain water back into the earth with native vegetation*

If we fill every open niche with layers of native trees and ground covers, we can put the sponge back into our developed spaces — intercepting, soaking up and retaining rain water before it floods or pollutes the landscape.

Learn how to maximize water absorption in urban and suburban areas, and to rewild with functional, versatile and durable native plants.

## **WALKS AND WORKSHOPS**

### **Native Plant Walk (Heather or Anna)**

#### *Offered in woodlands, meadows or botanic gardens in spring, summer or early fall*

Woodlands and meadows are full of exciting native plants, each with a story about landscape history. On these walks, Heather or Anna highlight the surprising diversity of species native to Maine, including delicate spring wildflowers, ferns and a variety of shrubs and trees. They also identify 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 and rewilding.

### Winter Pruning (Anna)

*Workshop must be conducted in a space with access to woody plants to prune*

Proper pruning of trees and shrubs improves their health and structure while enhancing their appearance in the landscape. Gain hands-on experience and learn basic pruning principles, including how to make proper cuts, when to prune different species, and how to select and maintain tools.

## ABOUT US

**Wild Seed Project** encourages using native plants in all landscapes to safeguard wildlife habitat, support biodiversity and mitigate the effects of climate change. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Wild Seed Project sells seeds of wild-type native plants, educates the public through programs and its website and publications and promotes rewilding efforts in Northeast landscapes.

Wild Seed Project founder **Heather McCargo** is an educator with more than 35 years of expertise in native plant propagation, landscape design and conservation. In 2014, she launched Wild Seed Project, where she created a web-based resource to educate about native plants and wild seed propagation (Go to “Learn” on our navigation bar), along with print publications including *Wild Seed* magazine and other guides (See our “Publications” page).

Heather lectures nationally and is widely published in journals and magazines. Previous to her work at Wild Seed Project, she was head plant propagator at the Native Plant Trust’s Garden in the Woods during the 1990s, worked at several landscape architecture and planning firms specializing in ecological design, contributed to research projects including the USAID Plants & Mountains, the National Gardening Association, and MOFGA, and designed the master plan for the medicinal gardens at Avena Botanicals in Rockland, ME. Heather has a B.A. in plant ecology from Hampshire College and a M.A. from the Conway School of Landscape Design.

As Wild Seed Project’s program manager, **Anna Fialkoff** works to further the organization’s educational programming, deepen relationships with partner organizations and catalyze a movement to rewild Maine.

Before joining Wild Seed Project, Anna was most recently Senior Horticulturist at Native Plant Trust’s Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA, where she designed and installed native plant gardens, managed interns and volunteers, and taught the public ways to incorporate native plants in their own gardens. With over a decade of experience, Anna brings with her a deep knowledge of native plant ecology, horticulture, conservation and ecological landscape design. Anna holds a BA in Human Ecology from College of the Atlantic and an MS in Ecological Design from The Conway School.