

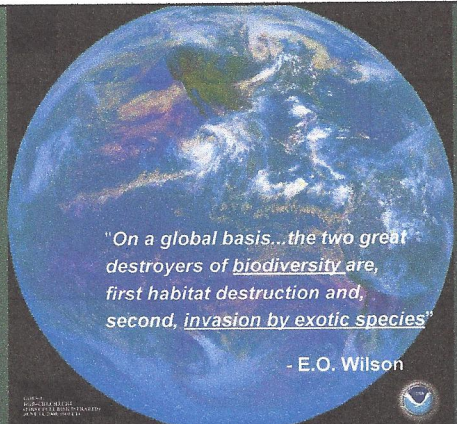

Growing Native Plant Communities

Simple ways to add biodiversity and beauty to your home landscape

We need a new paradigm...



A paradigm where diversity matters

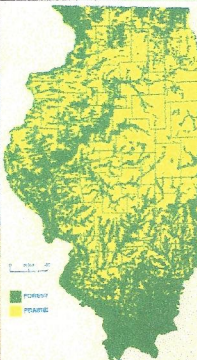



"On a global basis...the two great destroyers of biodiversity are, first habitat destruction and, second, invasion by exotic species"

- E.O. Wilson



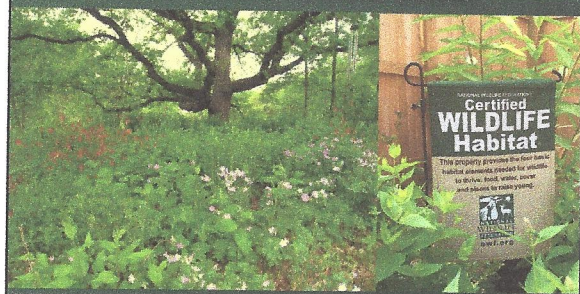
Factor 1 - Habitat loss



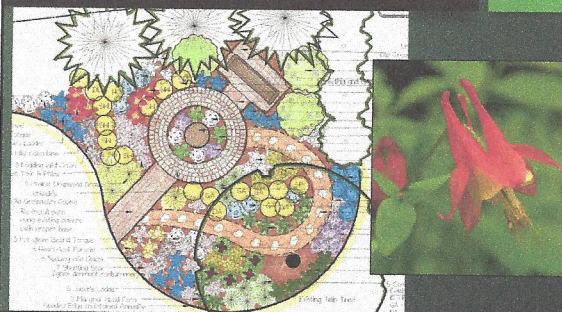
Urban green spaces need to play a more significant biodiversity role



Can backyards and gardens be ecologic restoration sites?



Moving beyond how things look



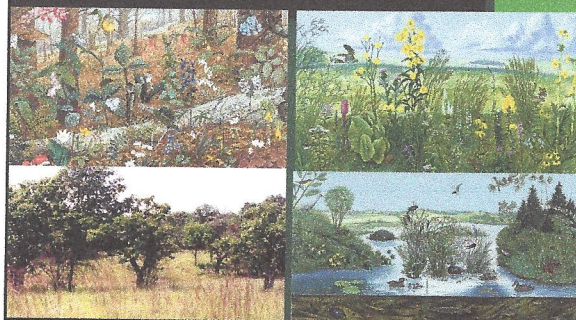
Ecosystems & plant communities



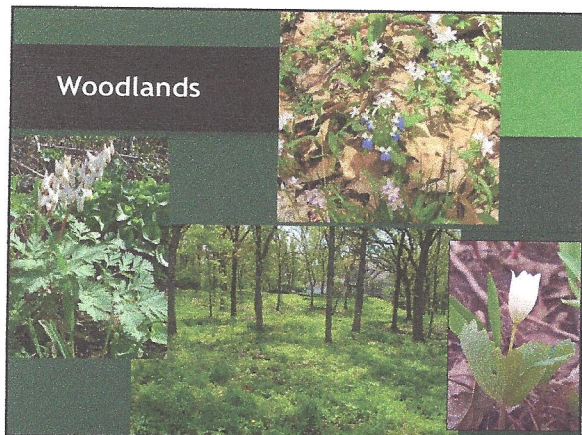
A collection of plant species within a designated geographical unit, which forms an identifiable vegetation type.

The components of each plant community are influenced by soil type, topography, climate and human disturbance.

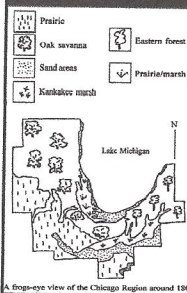
What are the main northern Illinois plant communities?



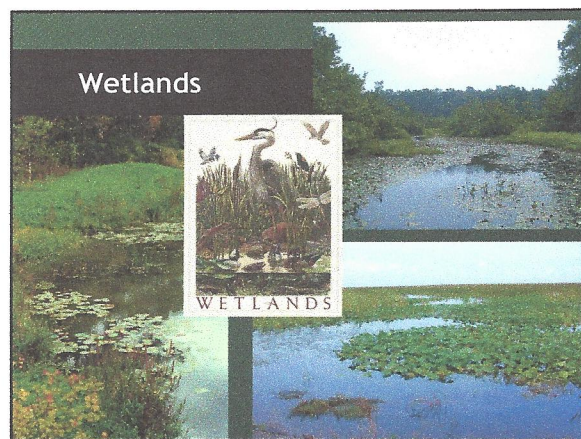
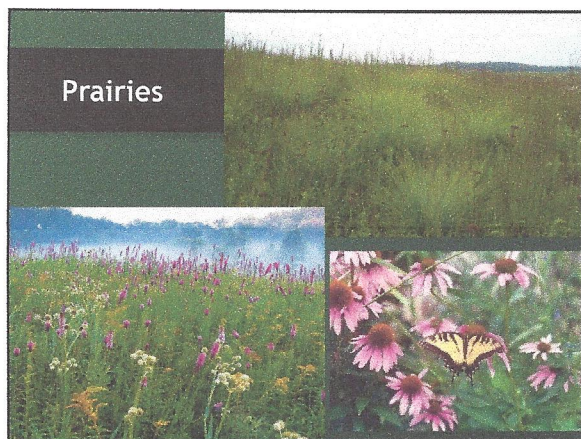
Woodlands




Savannas



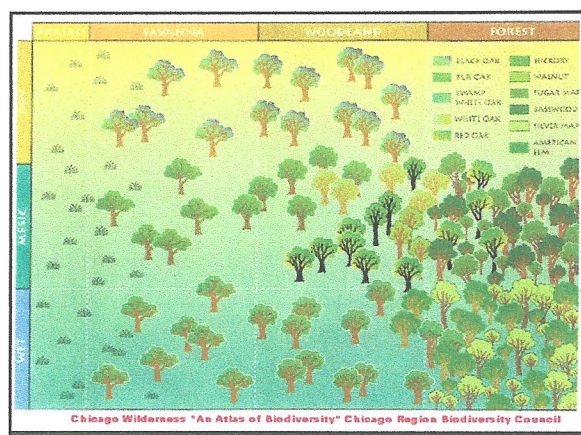
A frog-eye view of the Chicago Region around 1800.



Implications for planting?





- Community associations as “ready made” planting palettes
 - Light (sun/part/shade)
 - Soils (well-drained/hydric)
 - Moisture (hydrology)
- Provision of habitat
- Less maintenance once established
- Fewer disease or pest issues



Site analysis first

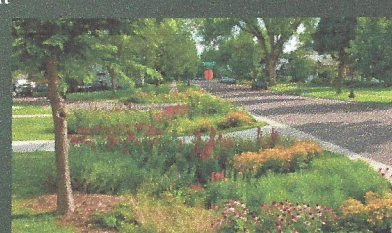
Information needed for SITE INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS:

- 1. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT**
 - Identify location of the house and land uses surrounding it. (e.g. next to main road, at the corner, near to school etc.)
 - To produce the location plan.
- 2. TOPOGRAPHY**
 - Identify the existing topography & slope condition. (e.g. is it a flat area or gentle slope etc.)
 - Identify elevation changes (if any) (e.g. existing step or retaining walls etc.)
- 3. DRAINAGE**
 - Identify the location of drainage and water spots on land.
- 4. VEGETATION**
 - Identify existing vegetation (all types of softscape).
- 5. MICROCLIMATE**
 - Identify direction of sunrise, sunset and wind direction

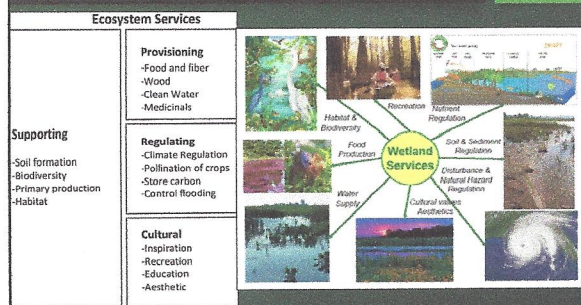



But what lessons from ecological restoration?

1. Set goals for your native garden
 - a) Functional
 - b) Aesthetic

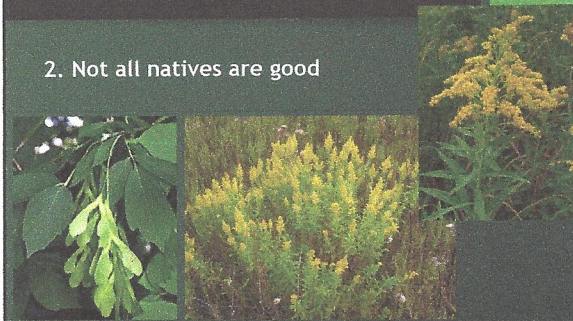


Functional roles of plants



Lessons from ecologic restoration

2. Not all natives are good



Lessons from ecologic restoration

3. C-values matter less in the garden than in large-scale restorations



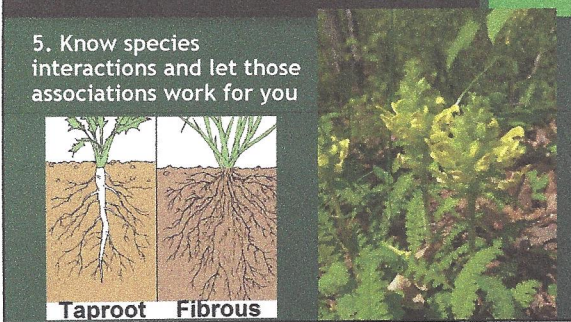
Lessons from ecologic restoration

4. Understand succession and plant behavior



Lessons from ecologic restoration

5. Know species interactions and let those associations work for you



Lessons from ecologic restoration

6. Don't amend or fertilize



Lessons from ecologic restoration

7. Seed is cheaper, plugs are faster - buy in bulk



2019 Native Plant Sales in the Chicago Suburbs



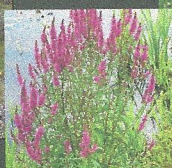
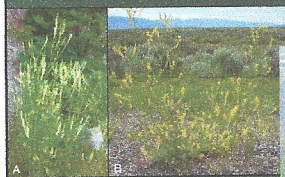
Lessons from ecologic restoration

8. Local genotype (and non-cultivar) helps habitat functional value



Lessons from ecologic restoration

9. Not all weeds are equally bad (some are horrible) - know their life cycle so as to best control



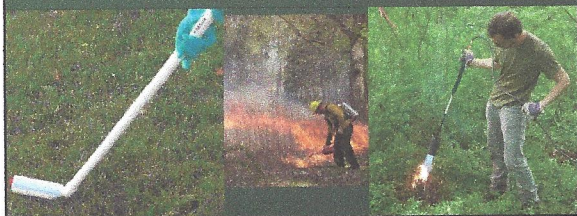
Lessons from ecologic restoration

10. If you are going into battle, use "sedge warriors"



Lessons from ecologic restoration

11. Fire and herbicides are necessary tools - know how to use them effectively



Lessons from ecologic restoration

12. Respect your neighbors, but know your rights

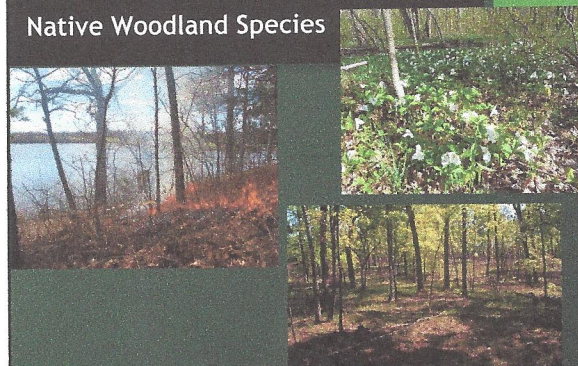


Lessons from ecologic restoration

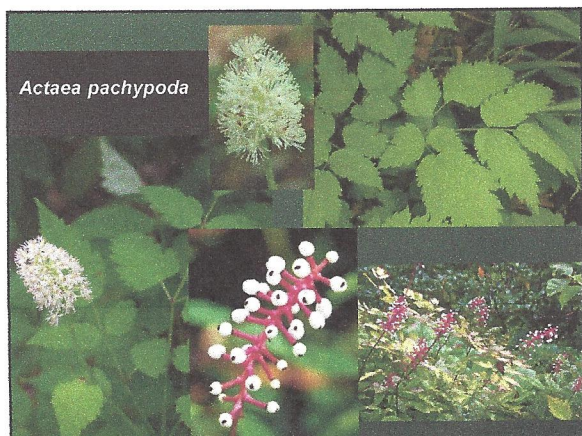
13. Natives take time



Native Woodland Species



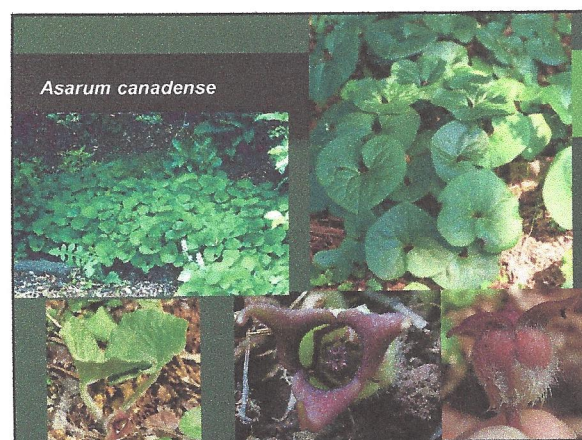
Actaea pachypoda



Aquilegia canadensis



Asarum canadense



Carex pensylvanica

