

a voice
for the natural
landscaping
movement



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Celebrating natives
plant and natural
landscapes
since 1979.

The Grapevine

By Maryann Whitman

Killing catalog clutter

Catalog Choice is a free service that lets you decline paper catalogs you no longer wish to receive. Reduce the amount of unsolicited mail in your mailbox, while helping to save trees. A sponsored project of the Ecology Center in Berkeley California, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Natural Resources Defense Council – and funded by the Overbrook Foundation, the Merck Family Fund, and the Kendeda Fund – the web site is at www.catalogchoice.org.

Christian Nelson, Journal Creative Director, reports that his wife, Cathy, has taken advantage of the service to remove the two of them from the mailing lists of over 160 mail-order catalogs. That's going to save at least a few trees, lower some transportation-caused emissions, greatly reduce the recycling load, and make for an easier walk up the hill from the mailbox.

Ancillary costs of unnatural landscapes

A major aspect not mentioned in most press releases and editorial comments with regard to energy usage and climate change is maintenance of landscapes. Namely, not using leaf blowers and electric pruners, not mowing lawns more than once a week and/or instead using human-propelled mowers (I just conjured up an image of a human leaf blower. I like it; it's certainly quieter.). Growing native plants and no-mow grasses eliminates the need for carbon-spewing, gasoline-powered engines, and for manufacturing and transporting additives such as fertilizer, herbicides, and insecticides.

Where are we going...and why am I in a handbasket?

With all the talk about floral and faunal species moving uphill (to where it's cooler), and poleward in both hemispheres, comes the realization that this movement is not likely to be an orderly affair. It will more closely approximate the movement of a herd of cats than buffalo. One wonders about the effect this will have on our biological communities and the ecological services they perform.

Bringing Nature Home

Released by Timber Press in December of 2007 is a book that is destined to have a significant effect on thinking about native plants: *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens*, by Douglas Tallamy. Don't wait for our review next issue to get your hands on a copy.

Maryann is Editor of the Wild Ones Journal, and comes to the position with an extensive background in environmental matters of all kinds.