Addendum to Landscaping Guidelines
From the Environmental Concerns Committee, Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends
Compiled by Adrian Fisher

The following is in addition to the Landscape Guidelines and Sustainable building guidelines that ECC developed last year. The committee plans to meet and discuss how to formulate a timetable by which proposed projects can be undertaken. Some of the following suggestions have been noted as for the future, if they seem difficult, expensive, or low on the list of priorities.

Two landscape-related priorities seem to stand out at the moment.

- Begin hedgerow work as soon as possible.
- Undertake consideration of memorial trees and whether a memorial grove might be established, with seating and some kind of accommodation for names.

Regarding Wildlife

The site functions as an oasis for animals within a landscape where modern agriculture provides limited habitat. Native plants have been nearly eliminated in the area and what was once a robust prairie and timber ecosystem exists in remnants. Herbicide and pesticide drift from adjacent fields is a concern. Already, with few conscious intentional landscaping modifications other than planting native trees, maintaining a restored "pocket prairie" and leaving the remnant hedgerows, the property hosts owls, red-headed woodpeckers, swifts, meadowlarks, swallows and bats, to name but a few easily noticed species. Charismatic insects such as Monarch and other butterflies have also been seen. In the future, we could develop nature-related interpretive activities, perhaps for members of the local community, as well as Friends. We are led to also consider what our own impact on wildlife might be with our use of the property.

ECC recommends that wildlife-friendly landscaping be given a priority so that the property's functions as a haven will be broadened and deepened.

- The barn should be maintained. Besides serving as a place for owls to live, other compatible uses could be found for it.
- Eastern Meadowlarks have been heard in the field west of the barn, so consideration should be given to maintaining their habitat by not mowing at nesting time.
- Consider removing the chicken house so that the land can be used in ways compatible for humans and wildlife. (A small pergola, possibly round or octagonal, could be constructed along the path between the Meeting House and Clear Creek House. Shaded by trees and vines, it would function as another shady porch where Friends could meet and play music. Or perhaps the memorial grove could be sited there.)
- The hedgerows should be widened and deepened—though not so much as to shut off views—and planted with additional native small trees, shrubs, grasses and flowers to provide cover and food sources.
- An ongoing tally of species seen on the site could be started and maintained so that habitat could be adjusted to those species' needs (as, for example we have left

snags in the hedgerows). Nancy Halliday already has a list of birds. Other lists, of mammals, insects and plants could be started. Perhaps this information could be put on the ILYM website.

- Some areas, such as roadside ditch areas, in the future could be planted with native species and only mowed in spring. They would more or less become bioswales. The USDA recommends this kind of roadside planting to aid in pollinator conservation.
- The extensive lawn could be over-sown with Dutch clover to maintain a polyculture lawn that would help restore soil health to the site while offering pesticide-free pollen and nectar source for bees and butterflies. This kind of clover is probably already present in the lawn, so it would not be adding yet another invasive species.

Lawn and Tree Care

A consensus seems to be growing that the site has too much lawn that is too expensive to keep mowed. While it is neither feasible nor desirable to eliminate the lawn, lawn reduction and changes in site management practices could help get the situation under control. In addition, some mode of protecting young trees from the mower should be employed.

- All lawn should be polyculture, or clover lawn.
- Widening the hedgerows and planting native grasses and forbs, not only in the restored prairie but also along roadsides in ditch areas should help reduce grass area and maintenance.
- Lawn should be mowed high, at 3 inches.
- Very young trees should be mulched so that mowers do not accidentally nick them, and to help provide nutrients, instead of the trees having to compete with the grass. According to some sources, young trees can grow up to 25% faster if nurtured in this way.
- At some future date mulch could be provided on site by gaining access to a chipper and chipping brush and cut-down trees instead of burning them. This would recycle organic material and help store carbon, instead of wasting that resource by burning. A mulch pile could be started by the barn.
- Composting could begin this spring, by starting a compost pile or building a large bin or bins, also near the barn. All non-woody plant material could be incorporated, as well as uncooked vegetable food waste. Compost could then be used in plantings, to top dress lawn areas, and so forth.

Buildings, paths and foundation plantings:

- In the future, if found to be necessary, selected buildings could be surrounded by a band of gravel about eighteen inches wide to help with drainage and to provide an unplanted area in case ladders need to be set up for exterior work.
- Foundation plantings such as hardy native shrubs that need little to no pruning could be planted approximately three feet (depending on the mature size) away from buildings, for pleasing effect and added water management around the foundations.

- Paths and drives could be made of crushed gravel for low maintenance and water permeability. Thought might be given to creating a path to and between the cabins according to the way that most people walk when getting there.

Hedgerows
The remnant hedge—or fence—rows are a historical feature reminding us of a land use feature formerly to be found widely across the Midwest. We consider it unfortunate that modern farming practices have eliminated so many hedgerows, because they are very important to land and ecosystem health. Hedgerows traditionally provided food and cover for wildlife, as well as food and wood for humans, and helped protect fields from soil loss. We could start planting this year.

- Widened and deepened hedgerows augmented with native species, list to be included, would serve as a reservoir of native plant species, benefit wildlife and serve as a windscreen for the property.
- Wildlife need green corridors, so connections between planting groups should be increased where feasible.
- In the future, working with other country residents to help create green corridors to connect our site with other natural areas, Clear Creek and ultimately the Illinois River area, would help strengthen the ecology of the entire county.

Regarding Plant Acquisition: ECC has decided to go ahead and begin the hedgerow project this year, to be continued in stages as funds allow. The chart below shows 16 species of small trees, shrubs and vines that we would like to eventually incorporate into the existing hedgerows and possibly in other strategic places as well. For the first stage we have ordered 50 1-gallon plants, 10 each of 5 species from Possibility Place Nursery in Monee, Illinois. They will propagate them in the greenhouse, to be ready in July for pickup. This is not our happiest schedule, but it is the way nature operates, and is the most economical option. Shrubs would cost $5 - $7 each, while trees would cost $7- $10 each. The minimum order is 50 plants, which I feel we could easily site. The order will come to approximately $350.

Hedgerow Plant Species
These species of small trees, shrubs and vines are native to Putnam County and should do well on our site. They have varying bloom times and are all good habitat plants for wildlife. The American plum and shining sumac will have to be sited carefully, so as not to interfere with surrounding fields. The plums can be planted with the redbuds along the road, especially at the east end of the row by the drive.

Light conditions: P = prairie (full sun), S = savanna (sun to part shade) W = woodland (part shade to shade)

** Denotes species ordered for 2011

Common Name	Latin name	Light	Bloom	Height x Width	Notes
Small Trees					
Serviceberry	*Amelanchier arborea* or *leavis*	P - S	Spring	25’ x 25’	Fruit
**Downy Hawthorn	*Cratagus mollis*	P – S - W	Spring	25’ x 25’	
Prairie Crab Apple	*Malus ioensis*	P - S	Spring	20’ x 15’	Fruit
**American Plum	*Prunus americana*	P - S	Spring	20’ x 15’	Fruit Rhizom.
Wafer Ash	*Ptelea trifoliata*	P - S	Spring	15’ x 15’	Multi-stemmed
Shrubs					
Black Chokeberry	*Aronia melanocarpa*	P - S	Spring	6’ x 6’	Berries
**American Hazelnut	*Corylus americana*	P - S	Spring	8’	Nuts Rhizom.
Shining Sumac	*Rhus glabra*	P	Spring, Summer	10’ x 10’	
Black Currant	*Ribes americanum*	S - W	Spring	5’ x 5’	Berries
Wild Gooseberry	*Ribes missouriense*	P - S	Spring	3’ x 3’	Berries
**Illinois Rose	*Rosa setigera*	P - S	Spring	8’ x 8’	
Prairie Willow	*Salix humilis*	P - S	Spring	5’ x 6’	
**Blackhaw Viburnum	*Viburnum prunifolium*	P - S	Spring		Berries
Vines					
Virgin’s Bower	*Clematis virginiana*	S	Summer	8’	
Summer Grapes	*Vitis aestivalis*	S - W	Spring		Fruit
Frost grapes	*Vitis cordifolia*	S - W	Spring		Fruit