

Wildscape Update John Dycus



They must be living right out at the wildscape, because the soil serendipity just keeps rolling.

After the Hugh O'Brian Youth (HOBY) leadership

students planted the berm in May, the only thing lacking was about 8 more yards of dirt on the back side. While wildscape volunteers pondered how that could possibly happen, an Upward Bound counselor called to inquire if 40 high school students could be utilized for a couple of hours. Insert exclamation points here.

The wildscape's super Arlington Parks & Rec crew, working with very short notice, got the dirt there in time for the Upward Bounders, who toiled with smiles on their faces as if they were having a party as they speedily moved that mountain. Wildscape ringleader Molly Hollar couldn't contain herself: "Tomorrow's world will surely improve with such terrific young people taking it over."

Wildscape volunteers should have the back of the berm planted by the time you read this. Turffalo, donated by Redenta's Garden, will be planted to complete upgrading the former meadow into a demonstration area for water conservation landscaping. Homeowners following this example can reduce watering to 1-3 times a year after the grass gets going in about two years. Once



established, even with no water except rainfall, the grass may go dormant in summer and return the following spring. Contrast this to traditional landscapes in 100-degree heat needing copious amounts of water to survive.



You can take home tufts of Turffalo and other water-conserving plants at the fall plant sale from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Randol Mill Park greenhouse. See the plant sale flyer in this issue, or visit thewildscape.org for a full list of plants available and more things to make you smile, including photos of a baby bunny living in the wildscape.

Mini-classes for volunteers will continue Saturday, September 6, when Josephine Keeney will advise us on attracting butterflies. Recently, Sandy Johnson conducted a session on attracting bluebirds, and John Darling talked about vermicomposting.



Wildscape Mini-Classes (tentative)

| Month | Subject | Speaker |
|-------|------------------------------|------------------|
| April | Rainwater Harvesting | Ann Knudsen |
| May | Attracting Birds | Julia Burgen |
| June | Plants of the Wildscape | Suzanne Tuttle |
| July | Attracting Bluebirds | Sandy Fountain |
| Aug | Vermicomposting | John Darling |
| Sept | Attracting Butterflies | Josephine Keeney |
| Oct | Native Landscape Maintenance | Lucy Harrell |
| Nov | Water Conservation | Greg Schadt |
| Dec | Native Trees & Their Care | Heather Dowell |
| Jan | Propagating Native Plants | Pat Lovejoy |
| Feb | Good Critters in Our Soil | Ann Mayo |