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BIODIVERSITY

—Andrew Donovan-Shead

Biodiversity is a concept that most of us think is good. Not only is it good on the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, it is also something that we can apply to the immediate environment in which we live. Our cities, towns, and villages are ecosystems worth studying, ecosystems shaped by our presence.



Butterfly Milkweed by Van Vives

It is easy to recognize the persons who value biodiversity by the healthy condition of their front gardens. Unsullied by fertilizers, herbicides, and

insecticides the biodiverse lawn is a riot of various grasses and broadleaved plants.

I have clover, dandelions, and wild strawberries growing in my lawn along with other unidentified plants and grasses, some of which like shade and some direct sun. Occasional irrigation and cutting with a mulching-mower every two or three weeks keeps it in reasonable shape and the ire of the neighbors at bay.

Another advantage of eschewing application of chemicals is that the garden is a healthier place for domestic pets, birds, and other creatures.



Butterfly Milkweed by Van Vives

So, biodiversity has practical applications close to home. It is a useful word with which to dumbfound those lovers of excessively groomed mono-cultures who are critical of multicultural cottage-style gardens like mine.

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