

**\*In Nebraska, Wildflower Week is celebrated the first week in June.**

## Wildflower Week 2020—In Praise of Wild Places

*“It is through close and intimate contact with a particular patch of ground that we learn to respond to the earth, to see that it really matters. We need to recognize the humble places where this alchemy occurs, and treat them as well as we treat our parks and preserves—or better, with less interference. Everybody has a ditch, or ought to. For only the ditches—and the fields, the woods, the ravines—can teach us to care enough for all the land.” Robert Michael Pyle*

This is a year unlike any other, a spring unlike any other, and it will be a Wildflower Week unlike any other. Normally we gather the first week of June for hikes, talks and other events that celebrate Nebraska’s beautiful wildflowers. This year social distancing won’t allow such numbers. And so Wildflower Week 2020 will rely on your own experience, your own memories of wildflowers and your own way of enjoying them in the present.

If we take the time to trace back our own experience, we might find that is precisely the way we came to our first love of nature, of being outdoors, of wildness. Whether it was a shelterbelt, a ditch, a high tree we could climb, a nearby abandoned lot or a hiding place under some lilac shrubs, most likely our first experience of wildness was something we came to entirely on our own.

It may have been in a managed, manicured garden but more likely it happened in a place that allowed freedom, imagination and manipulation.

### **Celebrate Wildflower Week in Early June**

There are plenty of resources for wildflower appreciation. You can find wildflower identification guides, a crossword puzzle, bookmarks, places to visit (please limit group size and spacing), recommended wildflowers for home gardens and much more at <https://plantnebraska.org/wildflower-week>.

And so, we invite you to a make-your-own Wildflower Week celebration this year. We hope you will find good ways to remember and share your first experiences in nature and enjoy them again.