

Resumé for Val Cunningham

For the past 25 years I have been writing about birds, their lives and habitats and what they need to continue to survive in this world. As a nature writer, I also research and write extensively about other elements of the natural world, especially pollinators.

My columns appear on a regular basis in the *Minneapolis StarTribune* and in *Outdoor News* newspaper. The National Home Gardening Club commissioned me to write a book about North America's hummingbirds, *The Gardener's Hummingbird Book*, which was published in 2004. Other publications that have printed articles I've written, include the *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, *The Northern Gardener*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Wild Bird* magazine, *Birding Business*, *Bird's Eye View*, *Women in the Outdoors* and others.

As part of my personal commitment to making the world a better place for birds and other wildlife, I served for 10 years (until recently) as the St. Paul Audubon Society's Conservation Committee co-chair. In this capacity, I helped plan and produce seminars and workshops on global warming, tar sands mining, the importance of native plants in the landscape and perils facing bees and other pollinators. A major push by the committee was to educate about the need to plant native plants and to create habitat corridors for wildlife. We produced a 12-page booklet titled "Go Native to Sustain Songbirds and Other Wildlife in your Garden," for which I served as chief author. This booklet has been extremely popular and has gone through two additional printings, with 30,000 copies distributed to date.

To build on the booklet's impact, I produced a slide show titled "Gardening with the Wild World in Mind," and made more than 15 presentations to Audubon chapters, garden clubs, nature clubs, municipal "Green" events and others over a two-year period.

And to make it easier for homeowners and others to purchase native plants for their landscapes, I worked with another Auduboner to create and produce the annual Landscape Revival: Native Plant Expo and Market. This hugely popular event is held in early June each year, and feature exhibits that educate about native plants and the major native plant growers in the metro area selling their plant stock. This has grown in four years time to an event that attracts more than 1,000 eager attendees each June.

As a member of the Como Community Council's Environment Committee I have helped plant and continue to help maintain two large native-plant gardens in Como Park and in my neighborhood.