

***SEEDLINGS, the Newsletter  
of Kalamazoo Area WILD ONES  
Native Plants, Natural Landscapes***

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What more substantial service to conservation  
than to practice it on one's own land?

--Aldo Leopold

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Drawing by Amelia Hansen

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***Steve Keto's February Program for  
Wild Ones Poses the Basic Question:  
"What is a Natural Community?"***

Our good friend Steve Keto will return to us in February as the first speaker of the new year, to lead off our year-long discussion of "Communities and Connections." He'll explore the evolving response to a fundamental question: "What Is a Natural Community?" He'll also outline a modern land ethic, one that includes people in a cohesive, holistic, "natural" community.

Steve will begin by providing an overview of how the idea of natural community evolves, from the writings of Henry David Thoreau through John Muir, Jens Jensen, Aldo Leopold, on up to Rachel Carson, Sara Stein, Doug Tallamy, and Nancy and Tom Small. Touching on key works by each of these authors, Steve will argue that an ever-greater sense of

crisis leads to an ever-broadening sense of what “natural community” must include.

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

Aldo Leopold



In exploring how people can become truly positive forces in the landscape, Steve will move beyond the native-plant movement into ways its principles and practices can develop synergies with the local food movement, permaculture, and agroecology, including the food-forest gardens being developed in the Kalamazoo area.

What is our future, as a community of people hoping to restore natural systems that have been critically degraded and desecrated? How can we both work with the dominant culture of our times and yet be countercultural, sowing the seeds of community that is truly sustainable and regenerative? How shall we better understand the consequences of what we do—and don't do? How shall we speak and act in these critical times so that people will listen to our message and work in community with us?

Steve will bring his usual energy and his ever-deepening sense of urgency to a presentation that both follows up on the message in our January film, *Hometown Habitat*, and sets the stage for the rest of the

year's programs and field trips. This is a program you won't want to miss!

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**Steve Keto** graduated from MSU with a M.S. degree in Poultry Science and B.S. degrees in Wildlife Management and Animal Science. During his 20 years as owner of **Nesta Prairie Nursery**, Steve was a major propagator of native plants for the Kalamazoo area and for the entire state. He has been the native-plant provider and mentor for many of us. Without him, the Kalamazoo Area Chapter of Wild Ones might never have happened and would certainly be much the poorer. He is now the Natural Areas and Preserves Manager for WMU. **For a fine story about Steve, see the latest issue of *Encore*:**

<http://www.encorekalamazoo.com/steve-keto>.

We will meet **Wednesday, Feb. 22**, at First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park St., downtown Kalamazoo. Socializing at 6:30; **program at 7.**

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## ***Wild Ones March Program Focuses on Supporting Beneficial Insects and Pollinators with Native Plants***

Logan Rowe, a graduate student in the Entomology Department at Michigan State University, will speak to Wild Ones in March about some of the current efforts in Michigan to support beneficial insects.

Beneficial insects provide very important pollination and pest management services in agricultural and restored landscapes, yet their populations are declining in many of these landscape types.

Understanding the factors that contribute to these declines and developing strategies to support beneficial insects have become increasingly important as landscapes continue to be altered to meet human demands. More and more of the efforts to restore or enhance landscapes are focusing on providing resources for beneficial insects.

Rowe will focus his presentation on a collaborative project to assess the relative attractiveness of more than 50 native plant species to pollinators and the natural enemies of crop pests. He will also explain some of the pollinator habitat enhancements that he and his colleagues have successfully established on farms in Michigan. Finally, he will

introduce the audience to a variety of beneficial insects, using powerpoint photos and preserved field collections.

Rowe will follow up this indoor program with a field trip On Saturday, July 22, to a study site for beneficial insects near Pullman, Michigan. Stand by for further information in later editions of *Seedlings*.

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Logan Rowe’s studies in the Department of Entomology at MSU focus on pollinator conservation and habitat restoration. His research involves developing plant-selection strategies to support pollinators in managed landscapes.

We will meet **Wednesday, March 22**, at First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park St., downtown Kalamazoo. Socializing at 6:30; **program at 7.**

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## ***Chief Leonard Crow Dog of the Lakota Nation Reminds Us All That Nobody “Owns” the Land*** **By Tom Small**

A quite remarkable event occurred recently at Standing Rock in North Dakota, where Native Americans have been resisting completion of an oil pipeline that is disrupting and destroying sites sacred to the Sioux tribes of the area, threatening water supplies, and encroaching on sacred lands and Native treaty rights.

Wes Clark Jr., son of four-star General Wesley Clark, former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO, was one of the leaders of the 2000 U.S. veterans who had gathered to act as “human shields” between the Native water protectors and the militarized police threatening them.

Clark, in formation with other veterans, knelt before the Standing Rock Sioux elders, asking their forgiveness for the long brutal history between the United States and Native Americans:

“Many of us, me particularly, are from the units that have hurt you over the many years. We came. We fought you. We took your land. We signed treaties that we broke. We stole minerals from your sacred hills. We blasted the faces of our presidents onto your sacred mountain. When we took still more land and then we took your

children and then we tried to take your language and we tried to eliminate your language that God gave you, and the Creator gave you. We didn't respect you, we polluted your Earth, we've hurt you in so many ways but we've come to say that we are sorry. We are at your service and we beg for your forgiveness."

But what I find most remarkable about the ceremony is the immediate response by Chief Leonard

Crow Dog on behalf of Standing Rock. He simply affirmed the integrity of the Lakota Sioux Nation, saying, in effect, regardless of what you did to us, we are still a nation and we have "preserved the caretaker position." He concluded by stating, very firmly, "We do not own the land, the land owns us."



Wesley Clark, Jr., with Lakota Chief Leonard Crow Dog

I've been thinking about the implications of Chief Crow Dog's words. You didn't take the land from us, he implied; you can't take it from us because we don't own it and we never did. We are its "caretakers" and responsible for its welfare. "The land owns us."

The message from Standing Rock is thus particularly pertinent to our time. We are only the caretakers. Nobody "owns" the land.

The other message that moves me is a simple statement from Rob Hopkins, the founder of the Transition movement: "I was struck by the gulf between the kind of poise and clarity at Standing Rock and what we see elsewhere in the world of politics."

If you haven't already seen a film clip of that moving ceremony, go to <http://www.salon.com/2016/12/05/we-beg-for-your-forgiveness-veterans-join-native-elders-in-celebration-ceremony/>

## ***Calendar of Events—February/March***

**Sunday, February 26, 2 to 4:30**

**Free showing of award-winning documentary film “Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time”**

**Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2208 Winchell, Kalamazoo**  
Part of the CORE film series on community.

**Sunday, February 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**Sambodh Center, 6363 N. 24<sup>th</sup>, Kalamazoo**

**Vedanta, Ecology, and Ancient Wisdom, East and West.**

The second of six monthly programs by **Ruth and Tom Small**. In this program, Tom will present a Powerpoint program and lead discussion on **“Indigenous Peoples & Natural Community: India and North America.”**

**Sunday, March 5 & Monday, March 6**

**Kellogg Conference Center, East Lansing**

**Wildflower Association of Michigan Annual Conference**

Keynote speakers: Lynn Steiner, speaking on “Celebrating Plants and Plant Communities”; and Ben Vogt, on “A New Garden Ethic.” Lots more of interest to Wild Ones. For full information and registration, go to [www.wildflowersmich.org](http://www.wildflowersmich.org).

**Sunday, March 19, 1:30 to 4 p.m.**

**Celebration of the Spring Equinox**

**Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2208 Winchell, Kalamazoo**

You’re invited! Join CORE (Communities Organized for Regenerative Earthcare) for a gala celebration of the Spring equinox. There will be music and dancing, Native American storytelling and cultural history of the area, Steve Keto talking about natural history of the neighborhood, games, and information about the CORE plans for the 5-acre Church property.

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## ***Quotations for Contemplation***

The human community, when healthy, is like an ancient forest.

--Gary Snyder, *The Practice of the Wild*

We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then and have known ever since that there was something new to me in those eyes, something known only to her and to the mountain. I was young then and full of trigger-itch; I thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view."

--Aldo Leopold, "Thinking Like a Mountain," *A Sand County Almanac*.

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### **Events Cancellation Policy**

If the weather is questionable and you're wondering whether a Wild Ones indoor program is canceled, please watch WWMT Channel 3 for a cancellation announcement of our program. If time permits, an e-mail cancellation notice will also be sent to members. Field trips and plant exchanges are held rain or shine and canceled only in severe weather: i.e., raining cattails and dogwoods, mit donner und blitzen.

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**SEEDLINGS** is edited by Tom Small and appears five times a year, with a few additional brief supplements. The next regular issue, for **March-April**, will come early in March. **Deadline for submission is Saturday, Feb. 25, 2017**. Please send submissions, comments, and suggestions to Tom at [yard2prairy@gmail.com](mailto:yard2prairy@gmail.com). For more information and news, check us out at [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org) and [www.facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes](http://www.facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes)