

***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  
from *Using Native Plants  
to Restore Community*

**May-June, 2015 — Contents**

- **Todd Barkman Leads Field Trip May 9 for Plant Identification**
- **23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Native-Plant Exchange Sunday, May 24, at Tom and Ruth's**
- **Join the Annual Life Cairn Ceremony During the Plant Exchange**
- **Wild Ones Schedules Extra October Program to Observe UN International Year of Soils**
- **Wild Ones June Field Trip Features Three Native Gardens in Local Communities**
- **Second Annual Wild Ones Plant Sale Saturday, May 23**
- **Wild Ones Monarch Committee Offers Citizen Science Projects**
- **One More Chance to Schedule a Site Visit**
- **Quotation for Contemplation**
- **Events Cancellation Policy**

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**Hands-On Practice**

***Todd Barkman Will Follow Up April Program with Plant ID Field Trip at DeLano Homestead May 9***

Following his excellent introduction to plant identification in April, Todd Barkman will lead a field trip at the Kalamazoo Nature Center's DeLano Homestead and Farm on Saturday, May 9, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. He'll review some of the basic principles for identifying families of plants and guide participants through the steps of identifying genus and species of a wide variety of plants.

Acquired by KNC in 1968, **the DeLano Farm** was originally established by William DeLano in 1843, and the farmhouse was built in 1858. The DeLano family eventually acquired over 600 acres of farmland and woodlot, most of which is now part of the Nature Center's DeLano Homestead. KNC has recently revived the farming operation as a CSA. The land also provides a wide range of native species on trails open to the public.

There will be no charge for participants.

**DIRECTIONS:** The address is 555 W. E Ave, Kalamazoo. Take Westnedge north towards the Nature Center and turn left on E Ave. The DeLano Homestead is about 0.4 mi on the left. We'll meet Todd in the parking lot at 10 a.m.

**Todd Barkman** first came to Western Michigan University in 2000. Currently a Professor of Biological Sciences, he teaches numerous botany courses, including Plant Systematics. He received his BS and MS in Botany from Michigan State University and PhD in Botany from The University of Texas, Austin. His research has historically been focused on plants of Borneo, but currently he can't resist the lure of Michigan botany.

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## ***Tom, Ruth, & Wild Ones Host 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Plant Exchange: Find New Native Plants, New and Old Friends***

THE SPRING PLANT EXCHANGE that Nancy Small began in 1992 is now in its 23rd year and has provided many hundreds of people with native plants and information about natural landscaping.

The exchange, on **Sunday, May 24, from 1 to 5 p.m.**, will offer numerous plants from Tom and Ruth's gardens, as well as plants brought by other Wild Ones members and supporters. In keeping with the principles we've always emphasized, it's not necessary to bring a plant in order to take one; and no plants will be for sale.

We do ask that attenders should bring **only plants native to Michigan**; and all plants should be potted up carefully and identified with labels. If in doubt as to whether your plant is a native, call or e-mail to inquire—269-381-4946; [yard2prairie@gmail.com](mailto:yard2prairie@gmail.com). or simply bring yourself, to enjoy and celebrate.

There will be refreshments, and the house will be open for rest, conversation, and shelter in the event of rain. **As always, we proceed, rain or shine.**

**The location is 2502 Waite Ave.**, one block west of Oakland Drive and one block south of Winchell. We'll block off some space near the driveway so that you can drive up to drop off or pick up plants; but you may have to park some distance from the house. Several members of Wild Ones will be available throughout the afternoon to answer questions, to help people set out the plants they bring, and to choose appropriate plants.

The purpose of the Plant Exchange is to foster natural landscaping with native plants. Here's a plant-exchange etiquette guide.

### **1. Respect and Share with Others**

- If you see a special plant, but there are only five, please don't take two. Ask the person who brought it, or one of the expert-looking folks hanging about, what the chances are of getting more.

### **2. Respect Plants:** give them the best possible chance of survival

- Plants might not get planted immediately. **Please pot them up carefully so they can survive.**
- Don't bring junk, which at a minimum includes non-native invasives.

### **3. From Each Person According to Ability; To Each According to Need**

- Just starting out? Don't have plants to bring? Of course you may take plants. In fact, that's one of the main purposes of the Plant Exchange. We all had to get started somehow, and when native plants start doing really well in your yard, bring some back.

- Don't have plants but want to bring something? Refreshments would be welcome.

**If you're not already a member of Wild Ones, please consider supporting our work by joining. If you don't join, consider making a modest donation.**

**Please provide species labels for your plants.**

Kathy Goff and the Hospitality Committee will appreciate your bringing some snacks to supplement what they provide. The rest of us will also greatly appreciate your snacks.

For questions about the exchange or about native species, please call Tom at (269) 381-4946, or e-mail yard2prairy@gmail.com.

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### ***Bring a Special Stone to Add to the "LIFE CAIRN" at the Plant Exchange, and Let Us Rededicate Ourselves to Restoring Life***

ON MAY 22, 2011, A GROUP OF PEOPLE GATHERED ON Mount Caburn, in East Sussex, England, to place the first stones of a "Life Cairn," to commemorate and to mourn all the species, over the entire planet, driven to extinction by human violence, development, and carelessness. Since that time, many thousands of people have made the gentle climb up the mountain to place a stone, participate in a ceremony, or simply to meditate, grieve for a particular species or all species, and dedicate themselves to preservation and restoration. Other, similar cairns are growing elsewhere in the world—a permanent and growing web of Life Cairns. **See <http://www.thelifecairnproject.org/>**

Tom and Ruth don't live on a mountain, but their house is near the highest point for three watersheds: Axtell Creek, Arcadia Creek, and Woods Lake. On May 24, 2015, to observe the **fourth anniversary of the first "Life Cairn,"** anyone who wishes to do so may bring a stone and continue to build the Life Cairn that we began three years ago here in Kalamazoo, in Ruth and Tom's front yard, as part of a "medicine wheel," easily visible and accessible from the street.

Please bring a stone from someplace familiar and important to you, preferably a small, light-colored one—one that will reflect light. So far, we have stones from Nepal, England, India, the Mississippi River, Canada, and many places in Michigan and the U.S.

During the plant exchange, between 3 and 3:30, those who wish to participate will gather to place their stones and observe a moment of silence, to honor those species vanished from the earth, those threatened with extinction, and those we may yet be able to save through our dedication to restoration of species and habitats.

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### **Our Vanishing Soil Communities**

### ***Wild Ones Adds Extra October Program by Mike Klug to Observe UN's International Year of Soils***

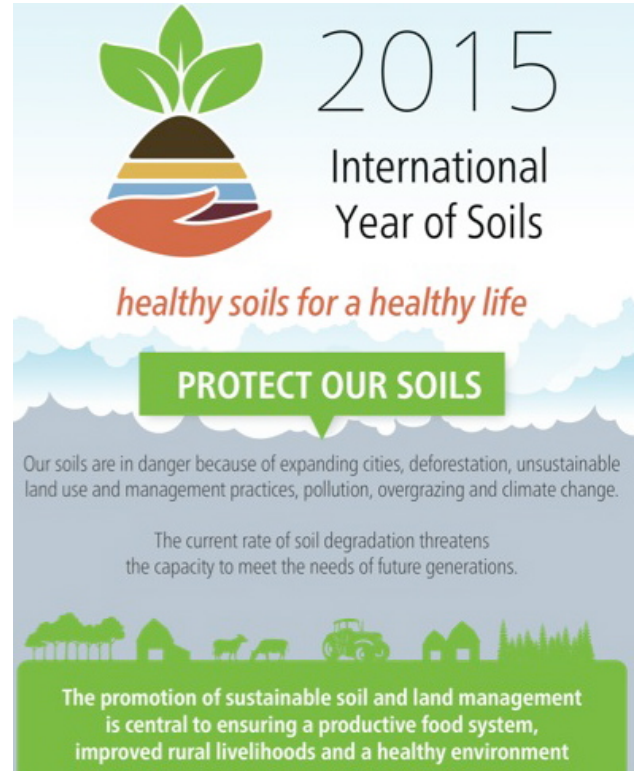
Because soil degradation has become such a serious problem internationally and locally and because Stewardship of the Land, our theme for this year's programs, must begin with care of the soil, Kalamazoo Wild Ones has added an extra

program for October, "Our Vanishing Soil Communities," with microbial ecologist Dr. Mike Klug.

Billions of diverse organisms live and interact within communities beneath the surface of soil. They form complex food webs which provide sustained resources for above-ground plants and animals. Unfortunately, the old adage 'out of sight, out of mind' applies to these communities, and we have lost concern for their viability and functions.

This has raised serious concerns internationally and has led the United Nations to declare 2015 as the International Year of Soils. Its purpose is to raise awareness of the impact of soil degradation on the long term ability of soils to support food production.

Mike will focus on the nature of soil communities, the interactions within these communities, and how they contribute to the structure and function of soils. He will also discuss how human activities in the past 100 years have impacted soil communities and ways that we can minimize these impacts in the future.



"Our Vanishing Soil Communities" will be on Wednesday, October 28, at 7 p.m. This program will be in addition to the previously announced October 10 conference on Pollinators co-sponsored by Wild Ones and the Kalamazoo Nature Center.

**Mike Klug** was born and educated in the mid-West. He joined the faculty in the Michigan State University Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and the Kellogg Biological Station (KBS) in 1971. His home base was at KBS, where he served as a faculty member and later as its resident Director until 2004.

Mike's research focused on microbial and microbial-invertebrate interactions involved in organic-matter decomposition. He explored diverse habitats ranging from fresh water and marine systems to agricultural soils. He often was associated with large multidisciplinary teams during these explorations. A central goal of this research was to determine common roles shared by organisms within these varied systems.

Upon retirement, Mike and his wife Carol became stewards of 80 acres of wooded and grassland landscape in southern Barry County. They have been involved in various restoration projects on the property. Mike and Carol are past co-presidents of the Kalamazoo Area chapter of Wild Ones.

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## ***Wild Ones Will Visit Three Local Native Gardens Linked with Community for Our June Field Trip***

The June field trip, in Saturday, June 20, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., will take Wild Ones to three unusual native-plant gardens, each of them linked to an important community project.

The first visit will be to the **Trybal Revival Gardens** of long-time Wild Ones members Tomme Maile and Dale Abbott, on Kalamazoo's east side, at 1429 E. Michigan Avenue. On either side of their home, where they have a rain garden and various native plantings, Tomme and Dale have established several projects on County Land Bank properties, including bee-hives, an extensive composting operation, community gardens, a production garden, a food forest, and a community tool-lending shed.



"We are dedicated," says Tomme, "to building community where we live. We use organic gardening and sustainability as our conduits to effect positive change in our little slice of the world."

From Tomme and Dale's, we go around the corner to **Peace House**, at 313 and 321 Phelps Avenue. Established by Jen and Mike DeWaele and Jerry and Molly Mechtenberg-Berrigan, Peace House is an intentional community in the Eastside Neighborhood of Kalamazoo "dedicated to nurturing the next generation of peacemakers. In the summer and through the school year we offer activities that let kids stretch their bodies and minds, experiment with nonviolence and learn fun and useful skills."

Wild Ones worked with Peace House volunteers to establish a native-plant garden between the two residences of Peace House, and during our tour we'll learn about the significance of the garden for the community and peace-making mission of Peace House.



Finally, we'll take a short trip over to the extensive native plantings around the **People's Food Co-op**, at 507 Harrison Street. The Food Co-op is yet another important community center that features native plants in its landscape. Soon after the Co-op moved to its new building in 2012, Kalamazoo Wild Ones was instrumental in establishing native plantings of grasses, sedges, forbs, shrubs, and trees all around the building—over 2000 native plants in all. We'll end our tour of *community* native plantings by hearing about the importance of this very diverse

native planting to the mission of the People's Food Co-op.



**There will be mmore details about this unique, informative Wild Ones field trip in the June SEEDLINGS supplement. Stand by.**

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## ***Second Annual Kalamazoo Wild Ones Native-Plant Sale Saturday, May 23, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.***

The second annual Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones native-plant sale will be at the People's Food Co-op, 507 Harrison, Kalamazoo, on Saturday, May 23, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The sale will feature nursery-quality, locally grown native plants which can be preordered or selected at the sale.

Many species of grasses, wildflowers, ground covers, trees, and shrubs will be available. Proceeds from the sale will help us to continue and expand our activities and programs.

The sale is co-sponsored by Geum Services, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Michigan Wildflower Farm, Kalamazoo Farmers Market, Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, and the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. See our webpage [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org) for a printable plant list/order form.

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## ***Wild Ones Offers Citizen Science Opportunities***

By Ilse Gebhard

THIS YEAR THE WILD FOR MONARCH PROGRAM OF WILD ONES is encouraging you to take up some citizen science projects. Details will be in the next issue of *Wild Ones Journal*. In the meantime you might start out in a small way by helping with one of the

following milkweed study projects:

1. Hosted by College of William and Mary, this simple **milkweed study** requires only the collecting of five milkweed leaf samples and, if possible, five milkweed bugs. You can find more information on the project at:

<http://monarchlab.org/resources-links/blog/citizen-scientists-needed-to-study-the-changing-milkweed-population>

Email [milkweedgenetics@gmail.com](mailto:milkweedgenetics@gmail.com) to request a collection kit.

Please let me know if you are interested and have ordered a collection kit. I would be willing to have a training/field session once the kits have arrived.

Ilse Gebhard, [gebhard.ilse@gmail.com](mailto:gebhard.ilse@gmail.com)

2. Another Citizen Science volunteer opportunity is the **Monarch Larva Monitoring Project**, developed at the University of Minnesota. In this project, you check a patch of milkweed weekly for the presence of monarch eggs and larvae, starting in mid to late May and running into September. We already have eight sites established in the greater Kalamazoo area, but more sites are needed.

There will be a training workshop for this project on May 27 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Visitor Center of the Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery just south of M-43 on Fish Hatchery Road, one mile west of the Kalamazoo/Van Buren county line.

For more information on the project, go to <http://www.mlmp.org/>

If you are interested in attending, please let me know so I can have enough materials on hand: [gebhard.ilse@gmail.com](mailto:gebhard.ilse@gmail.com)



An egg and five instars of the Monarch caterpillar, on milkweed leaves

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***Dave Wendling says, "Now's the time to schedule a Site Visit"***

Spring is here, the woodland spring ephemerals are blooming, and Now's the Time to schedule a site visit. If you're a member and need some advice on native

gardening, need to know what is growing in your yard, need to know how to control invasive plants, or need resources, we are here to help.

Whether you are a new or an established member, we will arrange for a more experienced native gardener to visit your property as a consultant to help you decide on how to use native plants in your landscape. We do not ask for money; our reward is seeing you succeed in creating beauty and native habitat in your yard.

To sign up contact Dave Wendling at 269-624-6946, [dave.wendling47@gmail.com](mailto:dave.wendling47@gmail.com).  
If you've already had a site visit and need more help with your landscape, you can contact Dave about our mentorship program.

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### ***Other Events of Interest to Wild Ones***

**Sunday, May 10, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

#### **Native Plant Sale**

Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, 701 W. Cloverdale Rd., Hastings, MI

See their web page [www.cedarcreekinstitute.org](http://www.cedarcreekinstitute.org) for more information

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### ***Quotation for Contemplation***

The most recent studies of the plant world have demonstrated that plants are sentient (and thus are endowed with senses), that they communicate (with each other and with animals), sleep, remember, and can even manipulate other species. For all intents and purposes, they can be described as intelligent . . . Perhaps knowing that plants perceive, communicate, remember, learn, and solve problems will help us someday to see them as closer to us and will also offer us the opportunity to study and protect them more effectively . . . The discussion of their rights is only beginning, but it can't be put off much longer.

--Stefano Mancuso and Alessandra Viola, *Brilliant Green: The Surprising History and Science of Plant Intelligence* (Island Press, 2015)

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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 **July-September, 2015**, will come early in July. **Deadline for submission is Friday, June 26, 2015.** 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)