

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

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

--Aldo Leopold

May-June, 2016 — Contents

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Drawing by Amelia Hansen

***May Brings More Flowers and Our Field Trip to
a Forest Preserve Rich in Bird and Plant Species***

Join Wild Ones and Nate Fuller, Conservation and Stewardship Director for the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, for our first field trip of the season. On **Saturday, May 7, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**, we'll travel to SWMLC's 290-acre Augusta Floodplain Forest Preserve, which has two miles of frontage along the Kalamazoo River between Augusta and Galesburg.

The site has been identified by Michigan Natural Features Inventory as an extremely high-quality floodplain forest. The river corridor of which this property is a part is critical for migrating and nesting birds, which should be very active at this time in May. Bird surveys in the area have identified over 200 species of birds, of which 20 are state-listed. The plant communities on the Preserve are some of the most diverse in the

region, abundant with orchids, state-threatened species, and a very diverse, mature forest that stretches for miles.

The Augusta Floodplain Forest is a limited-access preserve, currently open only for field trips and research. So this is a rare opportunity for Wild Ones to experience one of the few places in southwest Michigan where you can get a sense of “forest primeval.”

Our leader for the trip, **Nate Fuller**, one of the all-time most popular field-trip leaders for Wild Ones, has been with SWMLC since 2001, when he became its first Stewardship Specialist. Now the Conservancy’s Conservation and Stewardship Director, he works with volunteers and staff to protect and enhance the diversity, stability, and beauty of SWMLC’s preserves and other important natural areas in southwest Michigan. Nate received his B.S. in biology from Northland College, in Ashland, Wisconsin. He worked for several years as a naturalist and volunteer coordinator for Sarett Nature Center in Benton Harbor. He has also worked in Chicago as an education program coordinator for The Nature Conservancy. Nate is a former board member of The Stewardship Network and current board member of the Natural Areas Association, Stewards of Kleinstuck, and Long Haul Productions. He lives in Kalamazoo with his wife Erin and son Theo.

Car Pooling: We’ll meet in the Galesburg High School parking lot behind the school, 1076 N. 37th St, Galesburg, MI 49053, at 9:45 a.m. The school is on the north side of M-96, 0.7 miles east of where M-96 crosses the railroad tracks in Galesburg.

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Tom, Ruth, and Wild Ones Host 24th Annual Spring Plant Exchange: Find New Native Plants, New Friends

THE 24TH ANNUAL SPRING PLANT EXCHANGE will be at Ruth and Tom’s house, 2502 Waite Ave., Kalamazoo, on Sunday, May 22, from 1 to 5 p.m.

The exchange 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 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; or simply bring yourself, to enjoy and celebrate.

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

Several members of Wild Ones will be available throughout the afternoon to answer questions and to help people set out the plants they bring and to choose appropriate plants to take home.

Milkweed seeds and seedlings will be available as part of the special “Wild for Monarchs” project of Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones, in cooperation with Wild Ones chapters throughout the nation and Monarch Watch, headquartered at University of Kansas.

The purpose of the Plant Exchange is to foster community and 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 of them, 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. If you’re bringing plants, *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? *Some refreshments would be welcome.*

If you’re not already a member of Wild Ones, please consider supporting our work by joining.

Please provide species labels for your plants. For questions about the exchange or about native species, please call Tom at (269) 381-4946, or e-mail yard2prairie@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 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. Many other similar cairns are growing elsewhere in the world—a growing web of Life Cairns.

Anyone who wishes to do so may bring a stone and continue to build the Life Cairn that we began in 2012 in Ruth and Tom’s front yard, easily visible and accessible from the street.

Please bring a stone from someplace familiar and important to you, preferably a small, light-colored one that will reflect light. Around 3 p.m. during the plant exchange, those who wish to participate may 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 dedication to restoration of species and habitats. Let’s celebrate the fifth anniversary of the first Life Cairn.

As Martin Prechtel said at the dedication of the first Life Cairn, “This is a time of turning grief into beauty and the harsh confusion of these times into a possibility of a flowering earth.”

If you don’t attend the plant exchange or bring a stone, you will be welcome at any time to contribute a small stone to the cairn and to observe your own moment of remembrance.

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***Third Annual Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones
Native-Plant Sale Saturday, May 28, from 9 to 3***

The third annual Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones native-plant sale will be at the People’s Food Co-op again this year, on May 28, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Get all your locally grown, pesticide-free, nursery-quality native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and grasses at one convenient location in Kalamazoo (plus getting good, healthy food at the same location).

Our growers will be Hidden Savanna Nursery, Native Landscapes, and Treecology Nursery. The sale is co-sponsored by Geum Services, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Michigan Wildflower Farm, and the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

Our plant list and prices are available now on our webpage, www.kalamazoowildones.org, where you can download and print our plant list/order form. Please note that we also have Common Milkweed and Swamp Milkweed but they were not included on the order form. If you want either of these please make a note on the order form. They will be \$5.00 per plant. We encourage preorders for best selection, but most plants will still be available at the sale.

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Many Variables for When Milkweed Plants First Break Ground and First Monarch Eggs Appear

By Ilse Gebhard

Because I participate in the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project and Journey North, both Citizen Science projects, I collect all kinds of data and it's fun to analyze it. Sometimes it's instructive.

Temperatures and snow cover in March and April definitely influence the emergence of milkweed in Kalamazoo. Finding the first monarch eggs is a lot more complex. It depends on weather patterns starting in early March in Mexico and subsequent weather patterns from Texas to southwest Michigan. It also depends on the size of the monarch population: the more monarchs, the more likely a female will find my milkweed patch.

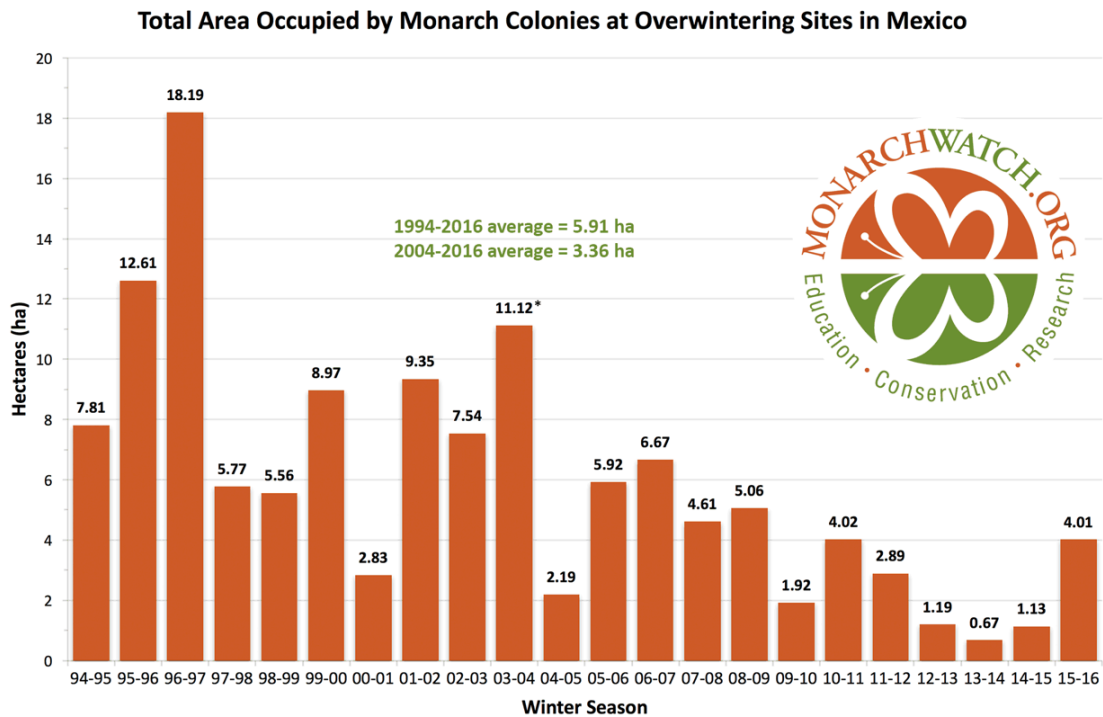


The shortest time from milkweed emergence to first egg date was in 2007 with 14 days and the longest time in 2015 with 45 days. The most unusual year was 2012 when we had a very early spring and milkweed emerged on April 11 and the first

monarch eggs were found on May 2. Unfortunately, we had a hard frost after the first eggs were laid, killing the eggs and freezing the milkweed back. The early spring was followed by a very hot and dry summer. Both the spring and summer conditions conspired against monarch reproduction and the winter of 2012-13 was the first of three lowest overwintering populations in Mexico.



As milkweed is disappearing from the landscape, it is becoming increasingly harder for the monarch population to recover from a year of poor reproduction due to adverse weather conditions. Scientists estimate that an average overwintering population of 6 hectares is needed to sustain the monarch population and save the migration



Data for 1994-2003 collected by personnel of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MBBR) of the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) in Mexico. Data for 2003-2014 collected by World Wildlife Fund Mexico in coordination with the Directorate of the MBBR.

* Represents colony sizes measured in November of 2003 before the colonies consolidated. Measures obtained in January 2004 indicated the population was much smaller, possibly 8-9 hectares. CT

phenomenon. The overwintering population in Mexico is measured by the total area the monarchs occupy each winter. After a low of 0.67 hectares the winter of 2013-14, an increase to 4.01 hectares this past winter was welcome news. Unfortunately, a freak late winter storm hit

the area of the sanctuaries, causing high mortality. So monarchs may be few again this summer.

Can we increase the amount of milkweed to sustain the monarch population? Only time will tell. **But we can help by planting more milkweed.**

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Other Programs of Interest to Wild Ones

Sunday, May 8, 2016, 1:30 p.m.

Invite a Monarch to Lunch—Plant a Milkweed

Kalamazoo Valley Museum, 230 N. Rose St., Kalamazoo

Learn from Ilse Gebhard about the life cycle of monarch butterflies, their habitat requirements, and their remarkable annual migration to Mexico, as well as the threat to their survival and what we can do to help. Informative handouts and milkweed seed packets will be available. Milkweed seedlings may also be available.

Sunday, May 15, 9:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Mahatma Gandhi and *Ahimsa*: Non-Violence in Principle & Practice

Sambodh Center, 6363 N. 24th St., Kalamazoo.

A day-long program of speakers, workshops, and conversation on non-violence will include a presentation by Tom Small on “Gandhi’s Mentors and Disciples: The Philosophy and Practice of *Ahimsa* (non-violence) as Earthcare.”

Other participants and presenters include Dr. Brian Wilson, WMU History Dept.; Yogacharya Ellen Grace O’Brian, Center for Spiritual Enlightenment, San Jose, CA; Swami Bodhananda Saraswati of Sambodh Society US and Sambodh Foundation India; Dr. Ruth Small, Director, BVI School of Ayurveda; Dr. Cybelle Shattuck, WMU Dept. of Religion; and Launda Wheatley, who specializes in dealing with trauma and stress for the Veterans Administration and Defense Department. For information, see <http://sambodh.us/SS/abtSCHE/SCHEprogram.html>

Pre-register by May 10 at sambodhsociety@sambodhsociety.us

Thursday, May 19, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Monarch Larva Monitoring Project Workshop

Pierce Cedar Creek Institute, 701 West Cloverdale Rd, Hastings
Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist Ilse Gebhard will train participants to monitor monarch populations, as well as share ways to improve local habitats for monarchs and participate in the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP).

MLMP is a cooperative study of monarch egg and larva densities in North America that helps determine the impact of Monarch Waystations. Participating community members choose sites with milkweed and gather data once a week during the monarch breeding season to aid scientists in international efforts to conserve and understand monarchs and their annual migration. This program will include a trip outside to observe milkweeds and monarch caterpillars.

FREE. But pre-registration is **required**:

<http://www.cedarcreekinstitute.com/forms/view.php?id=194018>

Wednesday, May 25, 6-8 p.m.

Monarch Larva Monitoring Project Workshop

Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery, M-43 and County Rd. 652 (Fish Hatchery Hall)

Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist Ilse Gebhard will train volunteers to collect data for the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP), a Citizen Science project that tracks monarch populations during the summer breeding season. Milkweed patches are checked and reported weekly for the presence of monarch eggs or larvae.

Participants may either choose their their own site to minitor or help with already established sites.

FREE. But pre-registration is **required**: gebhard.ilse@gmail.com

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Quotations for Contemplation

Every being is a center of the universe.

--Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago* (1973)

To my mind the laws which nature obeys are less suggestive of those which a machine obeys in its motion than of those which a musician obeys in writing a fugue, or a poet in composing a sonnet. The motions

of electrons and atoms do not resemble those of the parts of a locomotive so much as those of the dancers in a cotillion.

--Sir James Jeans, in *Quantum Questions: Mystical Writings of the World's Great Physicists* (2001)

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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 **July-September**, will come early in July. **Deadline for submission is Wednesday, June 29, 2016.** Please send submissions, comments, and suggestions to Tom at yard2prairy@gmail.com.

For more information and news, check us out at www.kalamazoowildones.org and www.facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes