

***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



Drawing by Amelia Hansen
from *Using Native Plants
to Restore Community*

October-December, 2015 — Contents

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Registration is Open Now

***Kalamazoo Wild Ones and Nature Center Present
Conference on "Pollinators: Perils and Possibilities"
Saturday, October 10, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at KNC***

Kalamazoo Wild Ones and the Kalamazoo Nature Center will present an all-star lineup of experts on what's happening to the vanishing and threatened pollinators of our native plants and food crops, and on what we can all do to help. **Register now; there are still openings. You may also register at the conference; but lunch is not guaranteed.**

**For more information and to register, please go to
<https://naturecenter.thankyou4caring.org/pollinators>**

The conference will be held at the Nature Center Saturday, October 10, beginning with registration and coffee at 8:30 a.m. and ending with a

reception at 4 p.m.

The keynote speaker, Heather Holm, is the author of *Pollinators of Native Plants*, a very popular, beautifully illustrated handbook on observing and identifying pollinators and beneficial insects and on using native plants to attract and help to protect and restore them.

Other speakers in the morning's program include Lisa Williams, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Jason Gibbs, MSU, on bee responses to pesticides and to habitat enhancement.

The afternoon's programs will include field trips and workshops with Heather Holm and local experts on vegetable farming with pollinators, bee identification, gardening for pollinators, bee hotels and habitats, and the importance of tree species for bees.

Registration fee is \$15 for both KNC and Wild Ones members, \$20 for non-members. Lunch and morning refreshments are included.

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Our Vanishing Soil Communities

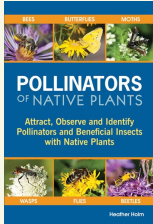

Wild Ones Adds Extra October Program by Mike Klug to Observe UN's International Year of Soils

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.

**Pollinators:
Perils & Possibilities**

A joint conference presented by
the Kalamazoo Nature Center and Kalamazoo Area Wild ones



Keynote speaker, author Heather Holm
Pollinators of Native Plants

We are happy to bring pollinator and garden specialists from around the Midwest together for presentations and workshops around the challenges our pollinators face. Learn what you can do to help.

October 10, 2015 from 8:30 am-5:00 pm
Cooper's Glen Auditorium, Kalamazoo Nature Center

For more information and to register, visit
<https://naturecenter.thankyou4caring.org/pollinators>
Register by noon, October 8
Fee: \$15 for KNC and Wild Ones members
\$20 non-members
(lunch included)

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Serious concerns about the degraded condition of the planet's soils 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 how we can minimize these impacts in the future and help to restore healthy soil.

PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION

“Our Vanishing Soil Communities” will be on Wednesday, October 28, **at the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2208 Winchell Ave.** As usual, socializing at 6:30, program promptly at 7 p.m.

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Ilse Gebhard Speaks on “Monarchs, Milkweeds and More,” for Wild Ones Meeting November 18

Instead of our usual potluck and review of the Chapter's programs and activities during the past year, Wild Ones will conclude our first year of programs on “Stewardship of the Land” with an illustrated talk on “Monarchs, Milkweeds, and More,” by Ilse Gebhard, chair of the Chapter's Monarch Committee.

Ilse has worked tirelessly for many years to restore Monarch habitat and help to preserve the miraculous annual migration of the Monarchs from Mexico to Canada and back. Her work has involved raising hundreds of Monarchs from egg to caterpillar to butterfly, establishing many dozens of Monarch “waystation” gardens, and giving many educational programs for both children and adults. She'll use colorful photos,



mostly from her own observations and research, to illustrate the Monarch life cycle. She'll discuss nectar and pollination relationships between insects and plants and explain the toxins that Monarchs secrete from milkweed to protect them from predators. In illustrating habitat requirements of Monarchs and other obligate milkweed-feeding insects, Ilse will cover all the common milkweeds in Michigan.

Ilse will show us all stages of Monarch migration to Mexico and why that migration is seriously threatened by loss of habitat, industrial farming practices, and use of neonicotinoid and other pesticides. We'll learn what more we can do to protect Monarchs and restore habitat for them.

Our November meeting will be at First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park, in downtown Kalamazoo. Socializing at 6:30 p.m., program promptly at 7. Following the program we'll have election of officers for 2016 and announcement of the 2016 programs and field trips

Ilse Gebhard is a retired research chemist. She's been on the board of the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo and is an active member of the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, the Kalamazoo Nature Center, and the Michigan Botanical Club. She's a charter member of the Kalamazoo Area Chapter of Wild Ones and the chair of its very active Monarch Committee. She participates in a number of Citizen Science projects, including Monarch butterfly related research for the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project, Project Monarch Health, Monarch Watch, and Journey North and South.

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Applications for Spring Funding Open Now
With Funding from Nancy Small Memorial Fund,
Coalitions Complete Two Major Native-Plant
Projects in September, Plan More for Next Spring

By Tom Small

Teams of workers from various groups and organizations completed two sizeable native-plant projects last month at Peace House on Kalamazoo's east side and at the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Winchell neighborhood.

At Peace House, the plantings involved adding to a native-plant bed established by Wild Ones three years ago and landscaping all around a basketball court recently completed for the neighborhood children. Peace House is an intentional community dedicated to fostering peace

and community among the young people and families of the Eastside Neighborhood and “nurturing the next generation of peacemakers.”

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was the meeting place for Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones for many years and is now a potential site as a neighborhood and community center dedicated to environmental restoration, the arts, and sustainable food for the community. The Church has more than four acres of land that can serve the community in a variety of ways.

Funding from Nancy Small Memorial Fund

Funding for the two projects came from the Nancy Small Memorial Fund. Plants purchased through grants from the Fund were supplemented by plants donated by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones, Ruth and Tom Small, and the WMU greenhouses and Landscape Services.

The plantings were coordinated and planned by Tom Small, together with the staff at Peace House and with Pastor Ruth Moerdyk and members of the congregation at the Christian Church.

The team of workers at Peace House included Jermaine McClellen and Amaya Whitfield, young people from the Eastside Neighborhood; Molly and Jerry Berrigan and Jen DeWaele from Peace House; Jill Terwilliger from Kalamazoo Friends Meeting; Matt Gross from the Eastside Neighborhood; Karen and Doug Williams from Wild Ones; and Tom Small.

Workers and Support from Broad Coalition

Workers from a broad coalition of organizations gathered for two Saturdays to prepare and plant beds of native plants at the Christian Church: Suzanne Coleman, a member of the Church congregation, together with her grandson Ben Laflamme and grandnieces Danielle Beischel and Alyzabeth DeHaan; Tomme Maile from Trybal Revival Gardens; Jim Ferner from Complete Streets Coalition; Eli Lowry and Christine Uggeri from Gibbs House and the WMU Office for Sustainability; Pam Rups and Barb Hasan from Kalamazoo Transition; Ann Klobucar from Wild Ones; Dave and Joni Wendling from Wild Ones and the Kalamazoo Climate Change Coalition’s Sustainable Food Working Group; Marla Fisher and Roza Wojcik from Bonamego Farms; and Ruth and Tom Small.

“We’re grateful for such wonderful help with both these projects,” said Tom. “I was particularly delighted to have so many young people involved: Ben, Danielle, and Alyzabeth at the Christian Church, and Jermaine and Amaya at Peace House. They all worked hard and were very helpful.”

More Plantings Scheduled for Spring

Plans are already under way for at least two more sizeable plantings next spring, with potential funding from the Nancy Small Memorial Fund and several other sources.

The Kalamazoo Parks Department has approved native plantings in Martin Luther King Park on the north side of downtown Kalamazoo. Support will come from Jeter’s Leaders, the Kalamazoo Junior Girls Organization, the City of Kalamazoo, and Landscape Love, a coalition of peace and social-justice activists.

Tom Small and Ryan Johnson, City Parks Director, will collaborate on a native-planting design for the two long beds east and west of the statue of Martin Luther King, Jr. The planting is scheduled to take place next spring, probably in late May.

Tom also plans to meet with Rebekah Kik, Kalamazoo City Planner, to gain greater city-wide coordination of native plantings and habitat restoration; her initial response to the idea was very positive.

Tom Small and Pam Rups have been advising Lara Oberlin, coordinator for a native planting on a County Land Bank property in the Vine Neighborhood, at the corner of Wall Street and South Park Street. The plan is to create a “pocket park” for the neighborhood, with a large, educational display of native plants. Pam and Tom will help Lara apply for funding from the Nancy Small Memorial Fund.

<p>Information about the Fund and the application form are available at www.kalamazoowildones.org/nancy-small-memorial-fund-grant-program/. Applications are now open for funding of native-plant projects and educational programs for 2016. Please spread the word.</p>
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Quotation for Contemplation

The beasts of the forest retire to the thickets; the birds hide themselves beneath the foliage of the trees, or in the crevices of the rocks. Yet, amid this apparent silence, when we lend an attentive ear to the most feeble sounds transmitted by the air, we hear a dull vibration, a continual murmur, a hum of insects, that fill, if we may use the expression, all the lower strata of the air. Nothing is better fitted to make man feel the extent and power of organic life. Myriads of insects creep upon the soil, and flutter round the plants parched by the ardour of the Sun. A confused noise issues from every bush, from the decayed trunks of trees, from the clefts of the rock, and from the ground undermined by the lizards, millepedes, and cecilians. There are so many voices proclaiming to us, that all nature breathes; and that, under a thousand different forms, life is diffused throughout the cracked and dusty soil, as well as in the bosom of the waters, and in the air that circulates around us.

--Alexander von Humboldt, *Personal Narrative* (1814), quoted in Andrea Wulf, *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World* (2015).

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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 you if you are a member.

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 **January-February, 2016**, will come early in January. **Deadline for submission is Thursday, Dec. 31, 2015.** 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