

***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



January-February, 2014 — Contents

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First Program of the New Year

***Overview of Michigan's Plant Communities
Opens 2014's Programs on Preserving Biodiversity***

KALAMAZOO WILD ONES BEGINS THE SECOND YEAR OF A TWO-YEAR SERIES on “Saving Native Plant Diversity” with an overview of the “Plant Communities of Michigan,” presented by Josh Cohen of Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI).

The emphasis in the first year of the series was on “Understanding Threats to Biodiversity.” Now we move on to methods of “Promoting and Preserving Biodiversity,” ranging from large-scale restorations to what Wild Ones members are doing on their own land and how they can make an even greater contribution to preserving biodiversity in a time of climate change and species extinction.

Cohen is the MNFI's specialist in classifying and inventorying Michigan's natural communities, and he's responsible for identifying prime areas for restoration. He'll provide Kalamazoo Wild Ones with a comprehensive view of Michigan's plant communities, what's being done to preserve and restore them, and what more needs to be done.

The program will be on Wednesday, January 22, at the First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park St., in downtown Kalamazoo. Socializing begins at 6:30; program begins promptly at 7 p.m., with discussion and announcements to follow.

Joshua Cohen has worked for the past fourteen years as an ecologist with Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI), Michigan's natural heritage program. In the fall of 2012 he became the Ecology discipline lead. His primary duties as an ecologist with MNFI involve refining and revising the natural community classification through ecological inventory and sampling, literature research, and data analysis. He is also responsible for classifying conservation targets and prioritizing areas for conservation and restoration; creating and delivering training sessions for resource professionals on biodiversity and ecosystem management; and designing and conducting vegetative sampling, ecological mapping and modeling, monitoring, and surveys for natural communities and threatened and endangered species.

Cohen received a Master's of Environmental Management in 1999 from Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment with a degree in Resource Ecology and a major in Conservation Biology. His Master's research was on the sustainable management of mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla* King) in Belize's Rio Bravo Conservation and Management Area. He pursued his interest in sustainable forestry following graduation, working as a forester in Neopit, WI for the Menominee Tribal Enterprises shortly before arriving at MNFI.

Throughout his education and professional experience, Cohen's research focus has been on forest ecology, but his interests have broadened during his time with MNFI to include peatland ecology and ecology of riparian and Great Lakes ecosystems. Since 2006 he has served as a plant ecology editor for the *Natural Areas Journal*.

Cohen is the lead author for the upcoming MSU Press book *A Field Guide to the Natural Communities of Michigan*. He has a strong avocation for landscape photography and especially enjoys climbing trees to capture a unique perspective of Michigan's ecosystems (many of his tree-top photos are featured in this book).

Cohen lives in Ann Arbor with his wife Martha Gove, his dog Boo, and his two children Esther and Sebastian Cohen, whose favorite natural community in Michigan is by far a bog (they love the sphagnum moss, blueberries and cranberries, insectivorous plants, and quaking bog mat).

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A Bit of Monarch History

Failed Campaign 25 Years Ago to Declare Monarch the National Insect Reminds Us that Monarch Populations Have Been Declining for a Long Time

By Ilse Gebhard, KAWO Monarch Committee

THE NUMBER OF MONARCHS AT THE OVERWINTERING SITES in Mexico was at an all-time low the winter of 2012-2013. Preliminary data indicate that the numbers will be

even further down this winter. While insect populations can vary greatly from year to year, the trend for monarchs is definitely downward since consistent population measurements were started in the winter of 1994-1995. Because it predates official population estimates and recent efforts to “save the monarch,” the following bit of monarch history is all the more visionary.

Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones member Mike Klug recently passed along to me a folder labeled “National Butterfly.” He had found it while working on a project documenting the history of Michigan State University’s Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners, Michigan. The contents of this cryptically labeled folder covered an aspect of monarch history all new to me, as it occurred in 1989, about 10 years before I really became involved with monarchs.

For its 100-year anniversary in 1989, the Entomological Society of America (ESA) decided that the country needed a national insect and they voted the monarch as its choice to represent about 600 species of butterflies and at that time nearly 90,000 other insect species that are an integral part of the natural heritage of the United States. They were well aware, nearly 25 years ago, that monarchs were declining in numbers under pressure from urbanization and loss of habitat resulting in the reduction of milkweeds and overwintering groves of trees in California and Mexico.

ESA put out a very nice colored brochure covering monarch history, biology, migration, ecology, and conservation of overwintering sites. The brochure includes a very impressive list of sponsoring organizations:

- Entomological Society of America (ESA)
- American Registry of Professional Entomologists
- American Institute of Biological Sciences
- Connecticut Entomological Society
- Lepidopterist Society
- National Audubon Society
- National Wildlife Federation
- New York Entomological Society
- The Nature Conservancy
- The Wildlife Society
- Xerces Society

In addition the folder contains letters of support from

- Kentucky Academy of Science;
- American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums;
- The American Entomological Society (AES);
- Kansas Associated Garden Clubs, Inc.

The ESA apparently worked very hard to promote the monarch as National Insect. Content of the “National Butterfly” folder was simply a packet of information (including

the brochure) sent out to various organizations asking them and their members to support this campaign. One such organization was the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary.

To me the most interesting document in the folder is a copy of H.J. RES. 411, a Joint Resolution introduced into the U.S. House of Representatives on September 27, 1989 by Representative Leon Panetta from California. Representative Panetta was born in Monterey, a well-known overwintering site of the Western U.S. monarch population, and was elected from his native district. The resolution was referred to the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, and by January 31, 1990 it had nine co-sponsors. Not having found any further information on the resolution by a web search, I assume it died for lack of co-sponsors.

The letter of support from the Kentucky Academy of Science states that they will pursue adoption of the monarch as the Kentucky state insect. I guess that was not to be either, as a web search shows the viceroy to be its state insect, adopted in 1990 – close, but not the real thing. On the other hand, the monarch is the state insect of Alabama, Idaho, Illinois, and Texas and the state butterfly of Minnesota, Vermont, and West Virginia. Interestingly, 15 states have the non-native honeybee as their state insect, one state lists it as the state bug, and two states list it as their state agricultural insect. Five states have no state butterfly, insect, or bug, including Michigan.

There is still no official U.S. national insect.

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A Message from the President

New Year Brings New Opportunities to Be Involved with Activities of the Kalamazoo Area Chapter

The Kalamazoo Area Chapter of Wild Ones had a very busy 2013, and we are planning another busy year for 2014. Make a new year's resolution now to get more involved with your chapter and help keep your organization moving forward. To see what we did in 2013 check our web page www.kalamazoowildones.org for our State of the Chapter report for 2013.

In 2013 we started our two-year series on “**Saving Native Plant Diversity.**” Last year's theme, “Understanding Threats to Biodiversity,” has been well received and I hope that you will find this year's programs on “Promoting and Preserving Biodiversity” informative and interesting. You can find a complete list of our programs and field trips on our web page.

Make your wish list (of native plants) and check it twice since we will be hosting our first annual Native Plant Sale fund raiser on May 24 (yes, we will still hold the plant exchanges as well). The executive committee hopes to gain greater visibility for Wild Ones through this event as well as increase our ability to fund local events, programs and

projects important to the Wild Ones mission. Details will be included in the next issue of SEEDLINGS.

Our new Mentorship program will also begin in 2014. Three members of the chapter will participate in the program and give it a test run. To be eligible you must be a Wild Ones member and have had a site visit. We'll have a brochure and application form available soon for the program, but in the meantime you can contact me if you're interested.

We elected officers for 2014 at our November Membership Meeting and here are the results:

President: Dave Wendling
Vice-president: Bruce Alden
Secretary: Cathy McMinn
Treasurer: Neil Sikora

Members at Large: Harry Bird and Mary Ann Menck (Ann Klobucar has since agreed to serve as a Member at Large, and the board will act on this at its January meeting)

I will start my New Year with a new e-mail address dave.wendling47@gmail.com so please make a note of it. As always you can contact me for information at any time.

Best Wishes for a Happy New Year!! Dave Wendling

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Michigan Botanical Club Plans 2014 Series of Programs on Past and Future of Michigan Trees

By Tyler Bassett, President, Michigan Botanical Club, Southwestern Chapter

During 2014, the Southwestern Chapter of the Michigan Botanical Club will be presenting a series of programs and field trips focused on the charismatic mega-flora of our region, the trees, entitled, "**Michigan Trees: Their Past and Future.**" There will be opportunities to learn about tree identification, the communities or habitats they form, threats they are facing, and much more. How better to kick off the year than by hearing **Dr. Donald Dickmann** speak on "**Michigan Forest Communities: Today and Tomorrow**"? The program will be Monday, January 20, 6:30 p.m., at the People's Church, 1758 N. 10th St., Oshtemo Township.

Dr. Dickmann is Professor emeritus in Forestry at Michigan State University and author of *Michigan Forest Communities: A Field Guide and Reference*. He will be providing a broad overview of the forest communities of Michigan: where they occur, which species they support, and how we can manage and conserve them. After all, he did write the book on the subject

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/michigan_forest_communities_-_a_field_guide_and_reference).

The Michigan Botanical Club has been a voice for the voiceless plants of our region since 1941, and the Southwestern Chapter has been active since 1968. The club has always included a mix of novices and experts, and our activities are open to all. Over the next couple of years, we will be organizing activities with the amateur and beginner botanist in mind, and would love it if you would join us in learning about and conserving Michigan's rich flora. The benefits of membership include a subscription to *The Michigan Botanist* (<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mbot/>), which prints technical and non-technical articles about Great Lakes botany.

Our monthly **indoor presentations** occur January through April and October and November at 6:30 p.m. at People's Church, 1758 N 10th St., Oshtemo Township. Our monthly **outdoor field trips** occur April through September at various natural areas around southwest Michigan.

For more information contact Tyler Bassett, at keepitsimple7@yahoo.com (cell: 269-580-4766) or go to www.michbotclub.org/southwestern-chapter-news; www.facebook.com/SWMBC

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Some Encouraging News

Not all the news is bad in this New Year. If you need a little encouragement, go to [Ten Environmental Victories and Triumphs of 2013](#), from a news report in [Indian Country Today](#) on environmental victories in 2013 and the native peoples and tribes that helped to make them happen. Most of the stories involve successful efforts at partial restorations of species at risk. Native tribes and First Nations in the U.S. and Canada have been very active in this past year with nonviolent direct action, political action, and restoration projects.

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Quotations for Contemplation

Everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round.

--John G. Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks* (1961)

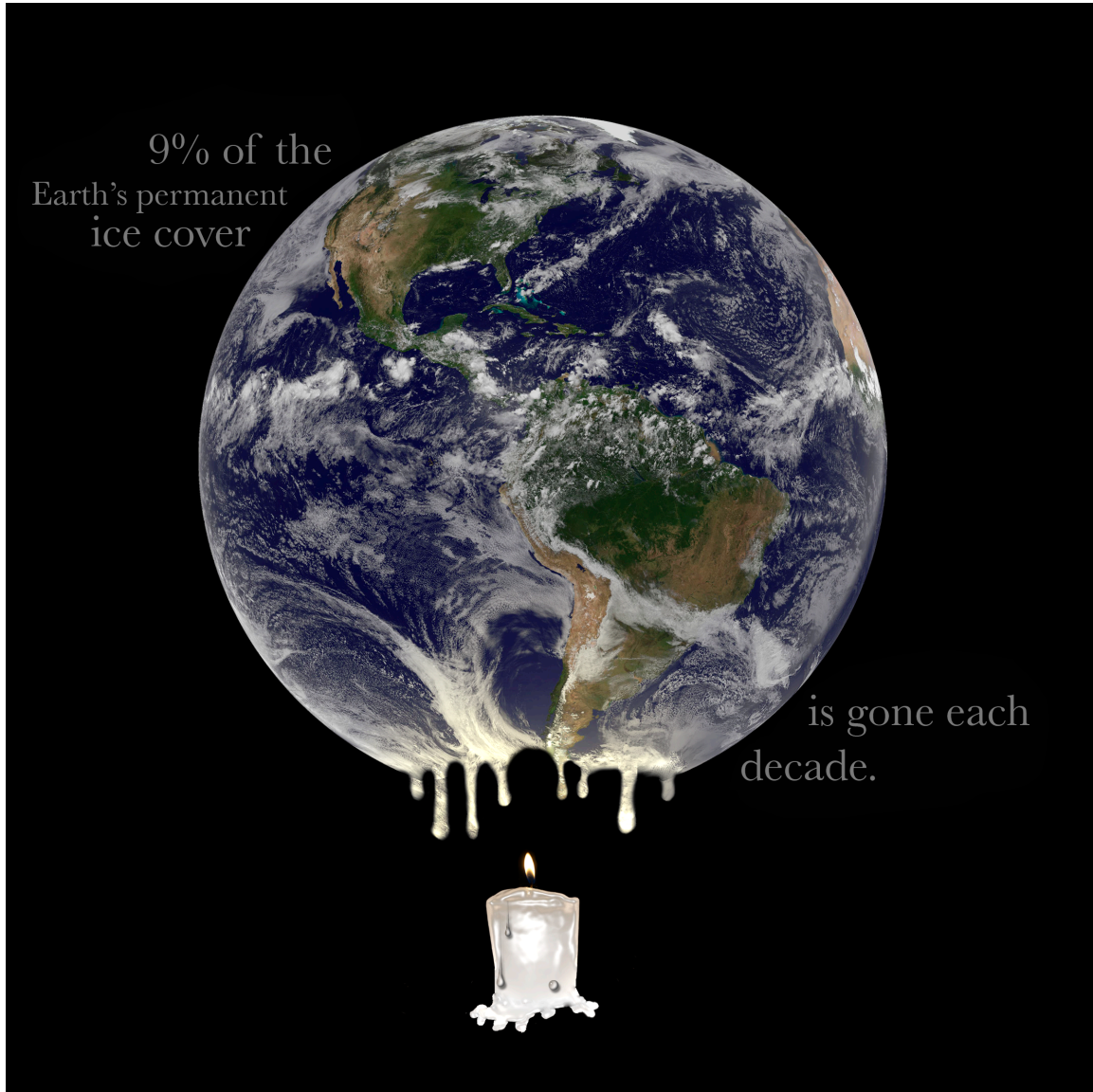
The idea of cyclical processes, of the interconnectedness of all things, and the assumption that nature is active and alive are fundamental to the history of human thought. No element of the interlocking cycle can be removed without the collapse of the cycle. The parts themselves take their meaning from the whole.

--Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature* (1980)

Let us recall the fact that water endeavours to round itself off into a sphere, to become an image of the whole cosmos. If a directional force is added to this, for instance the force of

gravity, then the combination of the two—sphere and directional force—will result in a screw-like or spiralling form . . . In all things great and small the whole of nature is interwoven with interpenetrating rhythms and movements, and shapes are created in the interplay between them.

--Theodore Schwenk, *Sensitive Chaos: The Creation of Flowing Forms in Water and Air* (1965)



Melting Earth III, by Nicholas Erard, WMU student in the Gwen Frostic School of Art. This piece by Erard was an entry in the WMU exhibit "Spare Change: The Art of Climate Change" in November, 2013, and his work was chosen by Laurie Russell, owner of Nature Connection, 359 S. Kalamazoo Mall, to be exhibited at her store for the November art hop.

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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, 2014**, will come early in March. **Deadline for submission is Friday, Feb. 28, 2014.** 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