

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

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### ***In January, Laura Strehlow Speaks about 20 Years of Restoring Woods and Meadows on Her Rural Land***

Long-time Wild Ones member Laura Strehlow will open the new Wild Ones program series on Wednesday, January 26, at 7 p.m., speaking on “Woods and Meadows: 20 Years of Native Landscaping.” Her program will be the first in a two-year series of programs and field trips on “Restoring Nature: Yard by Yard.”

Here’s Laura’s description of her program and her background:

Forest, swamp, wet and dry meadow, the thirty acres around my home in Allegan County is a diverse habitat. Once logged and farmed, the

land was starting to revert to a more natural state when I acquired it in 1990; since then I've worked hard to encourage the spread of native-species remnants and to restore the natural diversity that had been so greatly diminished through many years of farming.

The last couple of years I've been speaking to outside groups on behalf of Wild Ones, and now I have the opportunity to share with members of the chapter some of the many images I've gathered of the plants I've discovered or introduced on my land. I'll also talk about both successes I've had and problems I've encountered in my restorations. One measure of my success is that in 2009 this land was protected by a conservation easement with the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

I grew up in Parchment but left Michigan to wander about the world. I earned a B.S. in Pharmacy at the University of Washington in Seattle, and lived on the Olympic Peninsula before returning to Michigan in 1990. I finished a B.A. in Botany from U of Washington, and then a Master's degree in Biological Sciences from Western Michigan University. I've always loved plants and gardening. I credit Wild Ones with stoking my interest in native landscaping.

The Wild Ones program will be at the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2208 Winchell, Kalamazoo. Please note that the 2011 meeting time for indoor programs has been changed to 7 p.m. Socializing begins at 6:30, program promptly at 7 p.m. Announcements and more socializing will follow the program.

Laura's program will be followed by a field trip to her property on Saturday, June 18. Stand by for details in a later issue of SEEDLINGS.

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### *Steve Hamilton Speaks to Wild Ones in February on Biodiversity in Natural and Managed Ecosystems*

Steve Hamilton, Professor of Ecosystem Ecology & Biogeochemistry at MSU's Kellogg Biological Station, will present a program on "Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity in Natural and Managed Systems" for Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones on Wednesday, February 23, at 7 p.m.

Ecosystems are complex, highly diverse communities of plants, animals and microbes. Natural ecosystems provide fundamental services such as clean water and air and habitats for diverse populations. The importance of these

services is often taken for granted. Steve will provide examples of how human activities within these ecosystems impact their structure and the services they provide.

Steve is especially interested in aquatic systems, primarily wetlands and floodplains, because they represent an interface between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Such interfaces are often the most biologically diverse and productive.

Steve received his B.S. from Michigan Technological University, an M.S. from the University of Colorado, and his Ph.D. from University of California, Santa Barbara. He's also received a National Science Foundation Career Development Award.

Steve has participated in many multidisciplinary research projects including the NSF's Long Term Ecological Research Program on agricultural ecology and studies of nitrogen cycling and food webs in Michigan streams. He conducts research on river systems and floodplains at various sites in southern Michigan, South America, and Australia. Currently President of the Kalamazoo River Watershed Council, Steve regularly contributes information to local governments, regulatory agencies, NGOs, and the media.

The February program will be at the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2208 Winchell, Kalamazoo. Socializing begins at 6:30; program begins promptly at 7 p.m.

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### *A Message from the New Wild Ones Co-Presidents*

If you missed the annual membership meeting last November you may not know that we, Mike and Carol Klug, are your new co-presidents for 2011. Dave Wendling did such a great job as president that it takes two of us to fill his role.

Since many of you may not know us, we'd like to introduce ourselves and share some of our thoughts about the activities for our chapter in the New Year.

Mike is a retired microbial ecologist who spent 34 years at the MSU/Kellogg Biological Station. He also served as its director for ten years. Carol was a graduate of the first Kalamazoo County Master Gardeners program, the Master Gardener coordinator for Flower Fest, and the Mentorship Coordinator at the Kalamazoo Math and Science Center.

We've been active vegetable gardeners for more than 40 years. Our interest in native plants began when a prairie site at the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary was restored while Mike was director of KBS. We then established

prairie gardens in our yard in Richland. Nancy and Tom Small introduced us to Wild Ones, and the rest is history.

In 2004 we moved to an 80-acre parcel composed of woods, wetland and grassland in Barry County. A 29-acre portion had been seeded with native grasses and forbs in 2002, and since we took over the property we've been working to remove invasive species throughout the property and to gradually replace the 'way too big' lawn with native plants. We are also learning the art of native-plant propagation, and we now produce about 3000 plugs per year.

So what do we think are the important things to work toward this year? They include increasing public awareness of the Wild Ones organization and its mission and increasing our paid membership. Carol Andrews, former president of the national office summed it up well: "No members, no Wild Ones." We need your help in being advocates for our chapter and encouraging others to become members.

Our program committee has planned a two-year program titled "Restoring Nature, Yard by Yard." The first year (2011) examines natural and restored systems (see the program calendar elsewhere in this newsletter), while the second year (2012) will provide practical information to help members establish native plantings. We encourage you to promote our programs by informing your friends and colleagues.

Another goal is to expand our service projects in the community. For this we need more volunteers to assist with planting and maintenance at these sites. We hope that these projects will lead to greater awareness and appreciation of our mission and more involvement in our work. We'll provide more specific information about volunteer opportunities in the next few months.

Lastly, we'll appreciate your comments and suggestions to help make Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones an even stronger chapter. We look forward to working with you.

--Carol and Mike

Klug

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*Kalamazoo Wild Ones Begin New Two-Year Series  
of Programs on "Restoring Nature: Yard by Yard"*

In the first year of our new series of programs and field trips, the focus will be on the challenges presented by both natural and restored Michigan ecosystems. In 2012, we'll follow up with a year of programs on "Restoration: How and Where to Do It Yourself."

Here are the dates and topics for our program for the rest of 2011. Put the dates on your calendar now; and we'll supply details in newsletters and reminders to follow.

**Wednesday, March 23 - "Ecosystem Restoration on Disturbed Land" - Program by Michele Richards, Natural Resources Specialist, Ft. Custer Military Training Center.**

**Saturday, April 30 - Spring Wildflower Field Trip – led by Richard Brewer**

**Sunday, May 22 – Spring Plant Exchange - Nancy and Tom's gardens - Tom's Place.**

**Saturday, June 18 – Field Trip to Restored Woods and Meadows – led by Laura Strehlow**

**Saturday, July 23 – Field Trip - Biesecker Prairie, Indiana, a natural prairie – led by Chad Hughson, Hidden Savanna Nursery**

**Saturday, August 20 - Field Trip - Restoration Ecology/A Restored Prairie - Ft. Custer Military Reservation – led by Michele Richards and Tyler Bassett (Pre-registration required)**

**Sunday, Sept 11 – Fall Plant Exchange – Tom's Place**

**Wednesday, October 26 - "Land Use Changes: 1980-2011 and Beyond" – Program by Professor Stuart Gage, MSU**

**Wednesday, November 16 - "Invasive Species: Threats to Biodiversity" – Program by Nate Fuller, Stewardship Specialist, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy**

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## ***MORE Events of Interest to WILD ONES***

**Weekdays through January, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**An Exhibit of Prints by Ladislav Hanka**

**Light Fine Arts Gallery, Kalamazoo College**

**A pioneer in advocating and practicing natural landscaping in Kalamazoo, Lad Hanka is also an internationally renowned artist and printmaker. Among the works on**

exhibit at Kalamazoo College will be Lad's rich and powerful etching, "Kalamazoo River Song Line," a six-foot long print that the College, the Grand Rapids Art Museum, and the Detroit Art Institute have all purchased for their permanent collections. (The ferns used in preparing the plates for "Kalamazoo River Songline" came from Tom and Nancy Small's garden, and many of Lad's prints and drawings will be among the illustrations for the book on natural landscaping that Tom is finishing.)

Also included in the exhibit will be etchings from Lad's series, "Land of the Crooked Tree," and from his series, "Mushrooms: Inflorescences of Decay." Copies of Lad's bound books of prints will also be on display through winter quarter in the A.M. Todd Rare Book Room in the Kalamazoo College Library, Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m. and by appointment.

Lad earned a B.A. degree in biology from Kalamazoo College (1975), a B.S. degree in zoology from Colorado State University, and an M.F.A. degree in printmaking from Western Michigan University. Paul Olexia was among Lad's K College professors.

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### **Friday and Saturday, January 21 and 22**

**Stewardship Network and Land Trust Alliance Conference**

**"The Science, Practice, and Art of Restoring Native Ecosystems"**

**Kellogg Conference Center, East Lansing, Michigan**

For full information, see [www.stewardshipnetworkconference.org](http://www.stewardshipnetworkconference.org)

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### **Saturday, Feb. 26, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

**Wild Ones 2011 "Design with Nature" Conference**

**"Building Tomorrow's Heritage"**

**University of Minnesota Conference Center, St. Paul, Minnesota**

**Speakers include Rick Darke, Lynn Steiner, Stan Temple, Paula Westmoreland**

For full information, see [www.designwithnatureconference.org](http://www.designwithnatureconference.org)

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### **Sunday and Monday, March 6 and 7**

**Wildflower Association of Michigan Annual Conference**

**"Growing Arks: Learning the Skills for Saving Native Species"**

**Kellogg Conference Center, East Lansing, Michigan**

**Keynote speakers:**

- Janet Marinelli, author of *Stalking the Wild Amaranth: Gardening in the Age of Extinction* and editor-in-chief of *Plant: The Ultimate Visual Reference to Plants and Flowers of the World*.

- Scott Russell Sanders, author of *A Conservationist Manifesto* and many others novels, children's books, and collections of essays.

**Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones members included in the program: Steve Allen, Ilse Gebhard, Chad Hughson, Mike Klug, and Paul Olexia.**

**It's a wonderful two-day conference. For full information and registration, see [www.wildflowersmich.org](http://www.wildflowersmich.org)**

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## ***Chapter Committees and Personnel, 2011***

**Executive Committee: Harry Bird (At Large), Eleanore Chadderdon (Treasurer), Chad Hughson (At Large), Carol Klug and Mike Klug (Co-Presidents), Paul Olexia (Secretary), Judy Packard (Vice President), Dave Wendling (Past President)**

**Steering Committee: Executive Committee + chairs, editors, and coordinators, as follows: Membership, Newsletter, Programs, Publications, Publicity & Outreach**

**Community Projects: Catherine Niessink, Paul Olexia, Tom Small**

**Hospitality: David Bills, Maggie Ebrite**

**Kalamazoo Environmental Council Representative: Eleanore Chadderdon; alternate, Tom Small**

**Membership Coordinator: Chad Hughson**

**Newsletter and Publications Editor: Tom Small**

**Plant Exchange: Eleanore Chadderdon, Paul Olexia, Tom Small**

**Programs Committee: Ruth Caputo**

**Publications, Publicity and Outreach: Judy Packard**

**Site Visits Coordinator: Dave Wendling**

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## ***Gratitude***

**At the end of a college commencement address, David W. Orr made an apparently simple request:**

On closing, I asked each person in the audience to say “thank you” to someone present to whom they owed an unacknowledged debt. What I thought would be a few minutes turned into 20 minutes or so of fervent greeting, hugging, and even a few tears. The experience led me to think that we, in this affluent society, live mostly in a poverty of gratitude. And that is a simple problem to solve. (*Down to the Wire: Confronting Climate Collapse*, p. 151).

We’re not sure the solution is so simple. But here’s an installment: deep gratitude and hearty hugs for those who helped us with our community projects this past year: Vicki Berglund, Harry Bird, Eleanore Chadderdon, Kristi Chapman, Fran Galow, Pam Hoppe, Marie Johnson, Mike McCarville, Catherine Niessink, Paul Olexia, Tom Small. Thank you for your gift to all of us, including the plants and creatures of the earth.

If we’ve forgotten anyone, please forgive and help us to make amends.

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### *News from Faraway/Nearby*

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has announced that 2010 tied with 2005 as the warmest year of global surface temperature, since records began in 1880. This was the 34<sup>th</sup> consecutive year with global temperatures above the 20<sup>th</sup> century average. NASA has previously announced that the “meteorological” year from December 2009 through November 2010 was the hottest 12-month period on record.

According to the Global Historical Climatology Network, 2010 was the wettest year on record, in terms of global average precipitation. 2011, with deadly floods in Australia, Sri Lanka, and Brazil, has a headstart on setting a new record. The temperature of the ocean offshore from Queensland is 0.54°C. (slightly less than 1°F.) above the average for the period 1960-1990 and is the highest ever observed for the Australian region. That puts enough extra moisture into the air, according to climate scientists, to turn a heavy rainstorm into a disaster.

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### *Sightings and Insights*

#### Winter Haikus



Walking silently  
Miles of trackless snow ahead  
Chickadee-dee-dee

Still, clear, moonlit night  
Trees cast shadows on fresh snow  
Storm's fury broken

Sunny winter day  
From pondside wood-duck boxes  
Two screech owls peek out

--Ilse Gebhard

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### **“Sensations sweet, felt . . . along the heart”**

When I take young people on tours of the yard, they almost always do more touching and smelling than do the older people I take around. Young men and women alike want to experience the textures, the feel, of leaves, stems, and flowers, the scent of not only flowers but also leaves. I'm grateful to young friends for setting an example I want to follow.

Nancy and I have always loved the forms of plants—the patterns of their growth and their leaves. We were very grateful when Tyler Bassett brought us small-flowered leaf cup; we loved it not so much for its flowers—small and not at all showy—as for the sharp, complex patterns of its leaves, which seem a little menacing. Not until this past summer, prompted by young visitors, did I rub a leaf and then put my nose close enough to discover its slightly musky, smoky aroma.

I've always been drawn to writers who invoke all five senses with their imagery and language—poets like Shakespeare and John Keats. Here's the first stanza of one of my favorite poems, Keats's “To Autumn”:

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun,  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run:  
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,

And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For summer has o'er-brimmed their clammy cells.

The imagery is not just tactile; it involves the entire body.

Every spring, while she still could, Nancy would lie down flat on the ground to smell, touch, and embrace the violets. I habitually touch the plants that attract my eye; and I love the sounds of the garden. Now I'm more inclined to use *all* my senses, including smell and taste. I'm grateful to a younger generation for renewals and recognitions. For both sightings and insights; for inscapes of the whole body.

--Tom Small

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### *Quotations for Contemplation*

Virtually all of us are now convinced that global warming poses a clear and present danger to civilization.

--Lonnie Thompson (the glaciologist who pioneered the study of climate history by drilling ice cores from glaciers and ice sheets)

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But why not play it cool? Why not survive  
By Nature's laws that still keep us alive?  
Let us enlighten, then, our earthly burdens  
By going back to school, this time in gardens  
That burn no hotter than the summer day. . . .  
The garden lives by the immortal Wheel  
That turns in place, year after year, to heal  
It whole. Unlike our economic pyre  
That draws from ancient rock a fossil fire,  
An anti-life of radiance and fume  
That burns as power and remains as doom,  
The garden delves no deeper than its roots  
And lifts no higher than its leaves and fruits.

--Wendell Berry, "A Speech to the Garden Club of America," in *Leavings: Poems* (2010)

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**SEEDLINGS** is edited by Tom Small and appears five times a year. The next regular issue, for March-April, 2011, will come early in March; deadline for submission is Saturday, February 26.