

# **SEEDLINGS, the Newsletter**

## **of Kalamazoo Area WILD ONES,**

### **Native Plants, Natural Landscapes**

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#### **January/February, 2012 Contents**

- *Jennifer Hopwood opens 2012 with program on what we can do to preserve pollinators and their ecosystems. PLEASE NOTE: This, and all our indoor programs, will now be held at the First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park St., Kalamazoo*
- *Wild Ones members, for February program, present their landscaping joys and sorrows*
- *Wildflower Assn. of Michigan Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Birthday with Special Conference, Featuring Stephen Buchmann, March 4-5, in Lansing.*
- *Other Matters of Interest to Wild Ones*
- *Meet Our Members: Harry Bird. Dave Wendling Continues His Popular Series*
- *Quotations for Contemplation*

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#### **Xerces Society's Jennifer Hopwood Opens 2012 for Wild Ones with Program on How Pollinator Conservation Provides Key to Conserving Ecosystems & Biodiversity**

*Join Jennifer Hopwood, Midwest Pollinator Conservation Specialist with the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, Wednesday, Jan. 25, to learn more about the fascinating lives of pollinators. Jennifer will focus on how to manage your land and restore habitat to benefit and protect pollinators in a time when conventional landscaping and agricultural practices are threatening their diversity and the health of the ecosystems that depend on them.*

*Plant pollination by insects is one of the most widespread and important ecosystem services; it's essential in natural, agricultural, and urban landscapes. Native pollinators, especially native bees, provide this service, and pollinator conservation provides a unique and powerful framework for preserving and restoring healthy ecosystems.*

*Whether you're a land manager, an urban gardener, a suburban park manager, a working farmer, or a teacher, Jennifer will show us steps we can all take to help conserve these charismatic and important animals.*

*Jennifer Hopwood, the Midwest Regional Coordinator for the Xerces Society, moved herself and the Midwest office to the Kalamazoo area from St. Louis last summer. Her husband Tim is now a post-doctoral research fellow at MSU's Kellogg Biological Station. Jennifer holds a Master's degree in Entomology from the University of Kansas, where her research focused on bee communities in roadside prairie plants and prairie remnants. She travels throughout the Midwest providing programs to raise awareness and provide resources for pollinator conservation. Prior to her work with Xerces, she taught biology and environmental science and assisted with research on the effects of grassland management on insects.*

*The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, which celebrated its fortieth anniversary last year, is an international nonprofit organization that protects wildlife through conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. The society has a wonderful new book, [Attracting Native Pollinators. Protecting North America's Bees and Butterflies](#). To join the Society and learn about its work, visit [www.xerces.org/](http://www.xerces.org/)*

***PLEASE NOTE:** The January program, and all 2012 indoor programs, will be at the First United Methodist Church, 212 So. Park St., Kalamazoo (directions on our new web site: [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org)). Socializing at 6:30; Program begins promptly at 7:00 p.m.*

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## ***Wild Ones Members Share Their Sorrows & Joys”How***

### ***They Learned, Through Mistakes and Successes, to Follow Nature's Own Ways, for Program February 22***

*For the second Wild Ones program of the new year, on Wednesday, Feb. 22, three veteran members of Kalamazoo Wild Ones will share some of what they've learned over the years and some of the disappointments and delights they've experienced. Dave Wendling will tell us how his perennial garden has become a bird haven. He'll talk about how to do it on our own properties, how to avoid problems, and how it's sometimes best to have patience and wait.*

*Judy Dircks will illustrate a brief history of their property (77 acres, mostly forest, in Cooper Township), their struggles with invasives, some of the areas restored with natives, their attempts to introduce zebra swallowtail butterflies, and many of the other fascinating, photogenic residents of the land (insects, birds, critters).*

*Ruth Caputo will tell us how to enlist the neighbors and keep them happy in a neatnik neighborhood and a city (Portage) which doesn't always make things easy.*

*The presentations will be brief, leaving plenty of time for questions, shared delights, and incriminating confessions from the audience.*

*Included in the evening's program will be presentation of the first Nancy Cutbirth Small Distinguished Service Award, established to recognize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to our Chapter, to environmental education, and to restoration of native plants and natural landscapes in southwest Michigan.*

*Program will be at the First United Methodist Church, 212 So. Park, Kalamazoo. Socializing at 6:30; program begins promptly at 7 p.m.*

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## ***Wildflower Association of Michigan Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a Conference Featuring Experts on Pollinators and a Focus on What Gardeners Can Do***

*The 25<sup>th</sup> annual Wildflower Association conference, March 4 and 5 at the Kellogg Conference Center in East Lansing, will bring a stellar cast of experts on pollinators and on how to make your property better habitat for pollinators and for all wildlife.*

*The keynote speaker will be Stephen Buchmann, co-author of the wonderful book *The Forgotten Pollinators*. In his keynote talk, "Trouble in Paradise: Are We Losing Our Pollinators?" Dr. Buchmann will provide an overview of pollinator and bee diversity, touch on the honey bee crisis, and then focus primarily on losses to six species of native bumble bees and what is happening with them. He'll conclude with things gardeners, naturalists, and homeowners can do to help conserve the *æ*forgotten and disappearing pollinators.*

*There will be four other entomological talks, one of them an additional program by Dr. Buchmann. In addition, Jennifer Hopwood, from the Xerces Society, will speak about how we can all help to conserve pollinators. Rufus Isaacs, entomologist from MSU, will speak about how to use native plantings to provide habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects in conjunction with vegetable gardens and farm plots. Brenda Dziedzic, author of *Learn About Butterflies in the Garden*, will help us choose the right plants in order to help the butterflies. Still other speakers will help us to improve diversity and habitat on our land. Rick Meader, landscape architect, will speak on *æ*Making Your Landscape More Native. Catherine Zimmerman, author of *Urban and Suburban Meadows*, will*

*outline the benefits and techniques of œmeadowscaping. An old friend, Steve Keto, will provide an overview of native plants, œfrom A to Z. Middle-school students from Ann Arbor will inspire us with the story of how they and hundreds of other children have, over the years, created the ever-expanding Buhr Park Children's Wet Meadow.*

*And there's much, much more, including restoration projects, study of Michigan conifers, an overview of the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (with live viewings); exhibitors and book sales; an all-day educators' workshop on Sunday; grant awards; and reunions with good friends.*

*This is one you don't want to miss!*

*Registration for the conference is now open. Go to [www.wildflowersmich.org](http://www.wildflowersmich.org) for full information.*

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

¢ *Be sure to check out the chapter's new web site, [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org). Lots of good information, including the full schedule for 2012, and we'll be adding more. So keep coming back.*

¢ *Sales of Nancy and Tom's book, *Using Native Plants to Restore Community in Southwest Michigan and Beyond*, have been very good. We've already almost sold out the first printing of 550 copies; so we've ordered a second printing of 500 more. Responses to the book have been very enthusiastic. Many people have bought multiple copies for gifts; one realtor will be giving a copy to every family who buys a house from her this year; copies have been sent far and wide across the nation. For a full listing of where you can buy a copy, see the Chapter's new web site.*

¢ *Remember that all current members of Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones, and all new members, are entitled to a complimentary copy of the book. If you haven't already done so, be sure to pick up your copy at a chapter meeting"while supplies last. (No complimentary copies will be mailed out; they must be picked up.)*

¢ *The chapter has established the Nancy Small Memorial Fund in honor of the late co-founder of the chapter and co-author of the book. All proceeds from the book will go to the fund and be used for environmental education. You may also donate to the fund; we will be applying for 501(c)3 status.*

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### ***MEET OUR MEMBERS: Harry Bird***

*By Dave Wendling*

*Harry Bird has been a member of Wild Ones since 2005 and has been active in his quiet and persistent manner in all aspects of our chapter. If you attend a community project, plant exchange, special event, meeting, or field trip, you will*

*find Harry there helping out. If that's not enough, he is also a member at large on the Executive Committee and serves on the Publicity, Publications, and Outreach Committee. Harry states, "I read a newspaper notice of a meeting that had an interesting topic and when I read the available brochures at the meeting I realized that Wild Ones interests and goals fit mine. He has been a perfect fit for our chapter ever since!"*

- *Can you tell us a little about your background?*

*My family moved to rural New Jersey in 1948 when I was nine years old. We lived in an old grist mill which we converted to a living space. That was situated on the south side of the Musconetcong Mountain and on Hakehohake Creek. We raised animals, planted a garden, fished for trout, hunted, were active in Boy Scouts, and generally had a great time. My brother and I worked on the surrounding dairy, chicken and truck farms, and I worked at a local cheese factory making weekly batches of mozzarella and ricotta cheeses.*

*Mary Kaye and I have three married children. Andrew and his wife live in Wheat Ridge, CO; Kathleen and her husband live in Deadwood, SD; Jessica and her husband live in Winnetka, IL. Jessica has two children, Brandon who is six and Caitlin who is two.*

- *What was your occupation and educational background?*

*I enlisted in the Navy after high school, traveled extensively to many Atlantic, Caribbean, Mediterranean, Red Sea and Persian Gulf ports and lived for longer times in Asmara, Eritrea, and Grindavik, Iceland. I took courses at the University of Maryland extension while on active duty to get an associate's degree. In 1980 I retired from the Navy. We settled in Portage so that I could attend WMU, where I earned a bachelor's degree in Industrial Management and subsequently went to work for James River Corporation's KVP Group. Later I worked at the Battle Creek Federal Center for the Defense Logistics Information Service.*

- *How did you become interested in nature and particularly in native plants?*

*It happened gradually during my boyhood. Working on farm fields and gardens, I marveled at the persistence of some plants and the tenderness of others. The Boy Scouts valued wildlife knowledge, and two of my high school teachers instilled in me a respect for nature. My mother taught us many of the common plant and bird names. Finally, the widespread chestnut tree stumps throughout our woodlands made me sensitive to the havoc outside influences can cause.*

- *What is your favorite native plant?*

*The Compass Plant, [Silphium laciniatum](#), for its north-south orientation, for its standout leaf shape, and for the tall spike of flowers it finally sent up after languishing in my yard for six years.*

- *Tell us about your property and what you hope to accomplish in your yard.*

*I have a typical suburban yard with some plants from the original owners of over forty years ago and more importantly the remnants of the farm fencerow across the back property line. I have since added three small prairie/savanna plantings in the front yard and many woodland or savanna plants along the old fence line. I want to offer the neighbors encouragement toward natural landscaping by a good example of an interesting yard while providing a haven for birds, insects, children and me.*

- *I know that you are very involved with your grandchildren. Can you tell us how you keep them connected to the natural world?*

*Mary Kaye and I involve the grandkids in picking produce from the garden, trips to the Kalamazoo Nature Center and to the Globe Nature Center over in Illinois. We allow them to poke around in leaves and weeds to find bugs and anything else of interest. When we're out in the yard or at a nature center, we try to point out interesting plants and animals and teach them the names of flowers, trees, birds, and insects that we find. I like to talk with them and their parents about the importance of natural areas and the tension between people and nature. They have a bird feeder in their yard which I make a show of filling when it is sometimes ignored by their busy family. We then watch the birds come to the feeders and try to name them.*

*It's mutual aid, with all kinds of connections. I help the young folk to appreciate and be connected to the natural world. Helping them helps me keep connected. I help Wild Ones. Wild Ones helps me”and all of us.*

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## *Quotations for Contemplation*

*Defend the soil with your life, reader: there is no other organism that can touch the intelligence of what goes on beneath your feet . . . So here are the questions you should ask, a new form of grace to say over your food. Does this food build or destroy topsoil? Does it use only ambient sun and rainfall, or does it require fossil soil, fossil fuel, fossil water, and drained wetlands, damaged rivers? Could you walk to where it grows, or does it come to you on a path slick with petroleum?*

*--Lierre Keith, *The Vegetarian Myth: Food, Justice and Sustainability**

*Modern man . . . talks of a battle with Nature, forgetting that, if he won the battle, he would find himself on the losing side. --E. F. Schumacher*

*A pilgrim is someone who sees life as a sacred journey, who sees the Earth as a sacred home, who sees the universe as a process. "Satish Kumar, Earth Pilgrim*

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*SEEDLINGS is edited by Tom Small and appears five times a year. The next regular issue, for March/April, 2012, will come early in March. Deadline for submission is Wednesday, Feb. 29 (Happy Leap Day). Please send submissions, comments, and suggestions to Tom at [yard2prairy@gmail.com](mailto:yard2prairy@gmail.com).*