

***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

=====

**March-April, 2014 — Contents**

- TNC's Edward Stanton speaks to Wild Ones March 26 on "Preserving and Promoting Biodiversity: The Role of Restoration"
- Steve Keto Returns on April 23 to Speak on Connecting WMU's Backyards and Ours
- Other Programs of Interest to Wild Ones
- Report from the Monarch Committee, by Ilse Gebhard
- Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Rachel Carson as a Day of Action and Contemplation and Metamorphosis
- Applications Now Open for 2014 Site Visits and 2015 Mentorship Program
- A Few Statistics for Contemplation
- A Few Miracles for Contemplation, Courtesy of Mark Charles, AA Wild Ones
- Quotations for Contemplation: Rachel Carson, Charles Darwin, George Orwell



Milkweed pods

=====

**"Preserving Biodiversity" Series Continues**

***Restoration and Maintenance of Natural Processes Becomes  
Ever More Important in 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Says Nature Conservancy's  
Edward Stanton at Kalamazoo Wild Ones March 26 Program***

EDWARD STANTON, RESTORATION ECOLOGIST with The Nature Conservancy, will speak to Wild Ones on Wednesday, March 26, on "The Role of Restoration in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation."

Like the word *biodiversity*, the word *restoration* can have many meanings, and audiences rarely receive any precise definition. The most common limitation in defining and practicing *restoration* successfully is limited knowledge of the past history and condition of the land to be restored. Regardless, restoration in all its forms and scales will be an increasingly important aspect of conservation through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As we run out of lands to protect, the focus shifts to stewardship of those lands already protected and those under private ownership. During this transition, the debate will accelerate, over the price we are willing to pay for these restoration and maintenance needs. We will see those costs increasingly borne by private interests, and so we can expect to see ever more imaginative efforts to develop new technologies and markets directed at maintenance of natural processes. Now, at the beginning of the century, we must work diligently to insure that

protection and restoration of *natural* process and systems – our biodiversity – can be more cost-effective than technological fixes.

**Edward Stanton** has been working with The Nature Conservancy since November, 2012. He oversees restoration and stewardship of conservation lands in southwestern Michigan, focusing primarily on fens, prairies, and savannas. Prior to arriving in Michigan, Edward spent 13 years in California protecting and managing conservation lands. In southern California he worked for the Center for Natural Lands Management, managing 7000 acres of lands set aside for 16 threatened and endangered species, as well as 46 other special status species. He later moved to northern California to oversee conservation for the American Land Conservancy. In that role he permanently protected 11,000 acres in California’s Central Valley and surrounding foothills.

Although a generalist in his ecological studies, he has a particularly keen interest in birds and butterflies. Edward received a B.S. in Biology from West Chester University of Pennsylvania, and a M.S. in Ecology from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

**As usual, the program will be at First United Methodist, 212 So. Park, in downtown Kalamazoo. Refreshments and socializing at 6:30; program begins promptly at 7 p.m.**

+++++

**WMU’s Backyard and Yours**

***Old and Treasured Friend Steve Keto Returns for April’s Program to Tell Us about Connectivity and Conductivity***

Those of us who saw Steve Keto’s program at the Wildflower Association of Michigan’s conference early this month will testify that Steve is, in a word, *dynamic*! He packs so much energy, enthusiasm and expertise into an hour that time just can’t keep up with him.

Steve has been the native-plant provider and mentor for many of us. Without him, the Kalamazoo Area Chapter of Wild Ones might never have happened and would certainly be much the poorer. So help us welcome Steve as our speaker on Wednesday, April 23, in his new role as Natural Areas Manager at WMU, giving us an overview of our own backyards as they relate to and connect with local natural areas, preserves, and WMU’s own “backyards.”

Steve will inform us about WMU’s efforts to be a partner in environmental stewardship locally and with the wider Michigan community, as well as how we Wild Ones can be better partners with each other and with the University in enhancing habitat connectivity. Working with one of his students, Steve is learning new things about how to enhance Conductivity, the art of providing sufficient space, connectivity, and regeneration of natural process and function, so that species and ecological communities can self-adapt to changing climates and conditions.

Steve graduated from MSU with a M.S. degree in Poultry Science and B.S. degrees in Wildlife Management and Animal Science. As owner of Nesta Prairie Nursery, he was for 20 years a major propagator of native plants for the Kalamazoo area and for the entire state. He is now the natural areas manager for WMU’s Landscape Services Department.

The program will be at First United Methodist Church, 212 So. Park St., Wednesday, April 23. Socializing begins at 6:30, with the program beginning promptly at 7 p.m.

+++++

## ***Other Programs and Events of Interest to Wild Ones***

**Mondays, March 10, 17, 24, 31, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

### **HOPE FOR CREATION: Faith and Action in a Time of Climate Change**

A series of presentations about climate change and how people of faith might take meaningful action here in Kalamazoo

First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park St., downtown Kalamazoo

March 10: *Seeds of Hope: Faith Communities Adapting to Climate Change* with Cybelle Shattuck, University of Michigan

March 17: *The Economic Debate on the Costs of Climate Inaction* with Ahmed Hussien, Kalamazoo College

March 24: *Climate Change and Agriculture in Michigan: What We've Seen and What We Can Expect* with Phil Robertson, Kellogg Biological Station

March 31: *Our Response in Kalamazoo*, with Kiran Cunningham, Kalamazoo College

Each evening will begin with a simple soup supper followed by a presentation, then group discussion. No cost to attend and childcare will be provided (RSVP for childcare appreciated, [janscarrow@gmail.com](mailto:janscarrow@gmail.com)).

Co-sponsors of the series include the WMU faculty Working Group on Climate Change, an interfaith partnership of the Bronson Park churches, and other local faith communities. Many churches and faith communities will be holding “satellite” events throughout the month.

(ED. NOTE: If you're interested in the interrelation of faith, contemplation, and action in the time of climate change, you might find useful my pamphlet “Contemplative Action in the Time of Climate Change,” for Quaker Earthcare Witness, the Quaker environmental organization for North America. See

[http://www.quakerearthcare.org/sites/quakerearthcare.org/files/pamphlet/contemplative\\_action\\_tifold.pdf](http://www.quakerearthcare.org/sites/quakerearthcare.org/files/pamphlet/contemplative_action_tifold.pdf)

---

**Monday, March 17, 6:30 p.m.**

### **Tree Diseases (chestnut blight, spruce decline, and others)**

**Speakers: Josh Springer and Chrissy McTavish**

A program of Michigan Botanical Club—Southwestern Chapter

People's Church, 1758 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Kalamazoo

MICHIGAN IS WIDELY KNOWN FOR ITS SERENE FORESTS, natural areas, and beautiful and productive orchards. However, a changing environment and invasive organisms are leading to transformations throughout Michigan's forests and landscape trees. Examples include oak wilt and beech bark diseases in the upper peninsula and northern lower peninsula, Dutch elm disease statewide, and the spread of the Emerald ash borer infestation that began around Detroit. A

significant epidemic that got its start around 1900 in the U.S. is the destructive chestnut blight pathogen. A new epidemic called spruce decline is progressing throughout the state.

Josh and Chrissy's talk will provide an overview of many tree pests and pathogens, how these diseases are being managed, what role and changing environment may be playing, and the future direction of research at MSU to further understand and protect Michigan trees from destructive pests and pathogens.

**Christine McTavish** received her B.S. from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse in 2011, and is currently an M.S. graduate student in the Department of Plant Biology in the College of Natural Science. **Josh Springer** received his B.S. from the University of Michigan-Flint in Biology and Chemistry in 2006 and his Ph.D. from MSU in Plant Biology and Ecology, Evolutionary Biology, and Behavior in 2013.

---

**Saturday, March 29, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Wood Identification Class, with instructor Tom Nehil**

Tillers International, 10515 E. OP Ave., Scotts MI

Learn to identify woods, especially hardwoods of southern Michigan but also some softwoods and non-natives. There will be much illustration of how trees grow, their appearance, smell, feel, and microscopic characteristics. Tuition \$70; materials \$5. More information at [tillers@tillersinternational.org](mailto:tillers@tillersinternational.org); 269-626-0223.

---

**Monday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.**

**Lessons from the Passenger Pigeon, with naturalist and author Joel Greenberg**

A program of the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo  
People's Church, 1758 N. 10<sup>th</sup> St., Kalamazoo

The passenger pigeon officially became extinct on September 1, 1914. On that day a lonely pigeon named Martha died at the Cincinnati Zoo, the last of her kind. She now stands mounted in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum in Washington, D.C., a symbol for humankind that it is possible for a species numbering in the billions to be wiped out in less than a century. People continue to marvel at how quickly the bird was exterminated when it was so prevalent as to darken the sky for hours when flocks flew over and to topple large trees from the weight of so many roosting and nesting at one time.

Joel Greenberg will touch on the many reasons for the disaster, what the human race has learned from that extinction, and how best to prevent these types of species eradications. He is currently a research associate with both the Chicago Academy of Sciences Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum and the Chicago Field Museum. He's the author of four books, his latest published in late 2013, *A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*.



**Sunday, May 18, 1 to 5 p.m.**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Wild Ones Spring Native-Plant Exchange**  
 Tom and Ruth's house and gardens, 2502 Waite Ave., Kalamazoo

Bring extra plants and find new plants, experts to learn from, and beginners to share your enthusiasm and knowledge with. Enjoy good company and excellent refreshments from our Hospitality Committee. If you have no plants to exchange, just bring yourself or bring some refreshment to share.

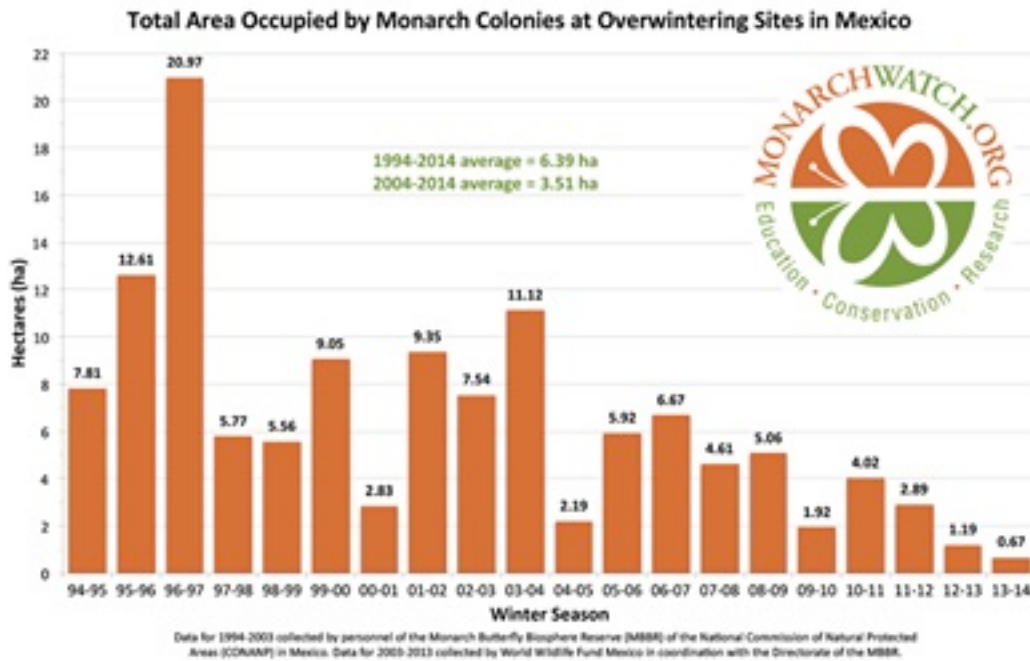
**Saturday, May 24, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**  
**First Annual Kalamazoo Wild Ones Native-Plant Sale**  
 People's Food Co-op, 507 Harrison, Kalamazoo

Locally grown, nursery quality native plants: individual plants, "garden samplers," shrubs, trees. See the chapter's web site for details: [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org).

+++++

***Monarch Committee and Wild Ones Prepare for Another Season of Planting Milkweeds to Help Save the Monarch Butterfly Migrations***  
 By Ilse Gebhard

As most of you know the number of monarchs at the overwintering sites in Mexico was the lowest ever since measurements started in 1995. While insect populations can vary widely from year to year, a clear downward trend has been documented for the monarch.



There are several reasons for this but a major one is Genetically Modified Crops (GMOs) that allow farmers to use herbicide to kill weeds, including milkweeds, without harming the crops.

Hence the great need to plant milkweeds elsewhere **NOW**. Well, maybe right after the snow melts.

For many years now I have started milkweeds by sowing seeds into small pots or plug flats in the fall and placing them outside all winter so they can go through the natural cold cycle and germinate in spring. Last fall we moved my “nursery” so that I could more easily access it, and as I look out the kitchen window, I wonder will spring ever come? Will that mound of snow covering those small pots ever melt? Will I have milkweeds to give away to welcoming homes in the fall?



While my seeds still are dormant, seedlings are already up and being transplanted from seed trays to plug flats by Mike and Carol Klug in their greenhouse. These milkweeds will be ready for planting by spring when Wild Ones will give them away at the plant exchange, as well as at our first ever native-plant sale, and other spring events.

Some of the milkweeds are designated for two Vine neighborhood community gardens where we are planning monarch waystations. While neighborhood residents will plant and maintain them, Wild Ones members can be of great help by providing native plants, both for shade and sun. Please bring to the plant exchange a few extras designated for these waystations.

The WMU greenhouse is again growing milkweeds and nectar plants this winter, and we hope they will be able to supply some plants for a waystation planned at the Edison Environmental Science Academy, although most of what they are growing is designated for various natural areas belonging to WMU.

I checked the Monarch Watch Waystation Registry and a couple of new waystations were registered in our area in the last few months. But our comfortable Michigan lead of 50 over



Texas is only 25 now. So please register your habitat of milkweeds and nectar plants as waystations at: <http://www.monarchwatch.org/waystations>

**Let's keep ahead of Texas!**

+++++

## ***Join in Contemplation & Action for Monarchs and Other Imperiled Pollinators April 14, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rachel Carson's Death***

An interfaith organization, Make Way for Monarchs, has called for a day of contemplation and action on behalf of monarch butterflies and the many other imperiled pollinators. The observation, in whatever way individuals, organizations, and communities determine, will be from dusk on April 13 (Palm Sunday) to dusk on April 14, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rachel Carson's death.

Through her landmark book *Silent Spring*, Rachel Carson was among the first to alert the American public to the risks which neglectful, untargeted or excessive uses of pesticides and herbicides may pose for pollinators such as monarch butterflies and bees. Other factors—from climate change to habitat fragmentation to diseases and pests—are also affecting the health and abundance of butterflies and bees. Now is the time for Americans to show love for and commitment to the pollinators which are essential not only to our own food system but to the well-being and diversity of all creatures.

For more information and a good essay, "Metamorphosis," by Gary Paul Nabham, ethnobotanist and co-author with Stephen Buchmann of *The Forgotten Pollinators*, go to <http://makewayformonarchs.org/i/archives/695>. For more detailed discussion of the monarch population status, please visit <http://monarchwatch.org/blog/>

### **Migratory Monarchs, the "Canary in the Cornfield"**

Staying in one place for many generations makes the butterflies more susceptible to the deadly *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* parasite. According to Lincoln Brower, a biologist at Sweet Briar College in Virginia, the "insidious disease" spreads when infected butterflies scatter spores on milkweed plants, which are then ingested by the next generation of caterpillars. If fewer butterflies migrate to Mexico, he says, the proportion of infected monarchs across North America may increase, imperiling the whole population.

Although the monarch lives all over the world and is not at risk of extinction, an end to the North American migration would likely endanger central Mexico's pine and oyamel fir forests. The butterfly provides an economic incentive to protect the unique alpine ecosystem. If the migration stops, "people are not going to benefit from the tourism and the forest is not going to be protected."

The monarch may also be the first sign that food webs in the U.S. Midwest are being irrevocably disrupted as a side effect of widespread planting of herbicide-tolerant crops, Brower says. Monarchs, he says, are "the canary in the cornfield."

--from *Science Now*, 29 January 2014

# ***Apply Now for Site Visits and Wild Ones Mentor Program***

By Dave Wendling

In spite of the repeated “Polar Vortexes,” some of our birds are already calling and the frogs will be singing in one month (I Hope!). That means it’s time to start thinking about our native plant gardens and making plans for this year. I am now taking requests for Site Visits for 2014 to help our members get started with native gardening or to help you improve on what you have already started. There will be signup sheets at the next two meetings, but you can also call or e-mail me if you would like to schedule a Site Visit.

If you check our webpage [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org), you can view and download our new Mentorship Brochure that describes our Mentorship Program and includes an application. The purpose of this program, an extension of our Site Visits, is to assist and encourage our members to transition traditional lawn and garden areas into native plant gardens that are attractive and at the same time valuable natural habitats. **If you have had a Site Visit and still feel you need more help getting started with native plants, the Mentorship program is for you.** If you qualify, we will match you with a more experienced member who will share his or her time and knowledge to assist you in planning and planting a small native garden. **Check it out! We are taking applications for 2015.**

Questions? Email [dave.wendling47@gmail.com](mailto:dave.wendling47@gmail.com) or call 269-624-6946

+++++

## ***A Few Statistics for Contemplation***

3400 species introduced into the U.S. have become invasive

92% of suburban landscaping is lawn

74% of suburban landscaping is with nonnative species

9% of suburban landscaping is with invasive species

~75% of the earth’s terrestrial surface is covered by novel ecosystems — we human beings can learn to live with them; in many cases, other species cannot.

(Source for all of the above: Doug Tallamy)

The energy expended for the industrial fixation of nitrogen as fertilizer for U.S. agriculture and urban/suburban landscaping is greater than the energy expended to run and maintain all of U.S. agricultural and yardcare equipment (Source: Wes Jackson).

Our disruptions of the nitrogen cycle are likely, in the long run, to be more destructive of planetary ecosystems than is our disruption of the carbon cycle (Source: Vaclav Smil, *Global Catastrophes and Trends*, MIT Press).

Climate zones are moving north at an average rate of 3.8 feet per day (Source: Ecologist Scott Loarie, Carnegie Institute for Science, in the journal *Nature*).

+++++



## *A Few Miracles for Contemplation*

A communication from Mark Charles, Ann Arbor Wild Ones

In some northern European traditions, this is the time of year when seeds 'quicken' or begin to germinate in the soil. It is certainly a time when my spirit begins to stir towards Spring!

In recent years I've learned that this is also the time when the larvae of bumblebees and other ground-nesting native bees begin to stir. Somehow they respond to tiny alarm clocks. They begin to eat the pollen-biscuits their mothers placed in their nest tunnels. They will emerge just in time to visit the first blooms of spring (mostly willows), where they will collect pollen to nourish the next generation.

The synchronization of native plants and pollinators to me seems almost miraculous. It is one of the reasons I plant only native plants of local genotype -- to keep the clocks in step.

My earliest sighting of native bees was on March 31, 2010, in Buhr Park sand prairie.

Spring is coming -- you can count on it.

+++++

## *Quotations for Contemplation*



It is ironic to think that man might determine his own future by something so seemingly trivial as the choice of an insect spray.

--Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

---

The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man. --Charles Darwin

---

In a time of deceit, telling the truth is revolutionary. --George Orwell

+++++

**SEEDLINGS** is edited by Tom Small and appears five times a year, with a few additional brief supplements. The next regular issue, for **May-June**, will come early in May. **Deadline for**

**submission is Monday, April 28, 2014.** Please send submissions, comments, and suggestions to Tom at [yard2prairie@gmail.com](mailto:yard2prairie@gmail.com).  
For more information and news, check us out at [www.kalamazoowildones.org](http://www.kalamazoowildones.org) and [www.facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes](http://www.facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes)