

SEEDLINGS, the Newsletter

of Kalamazoo Area WILD ONES,

Native Plants, Natural Landscapes

September–November, 2011—Contents

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Wild Ones Fall Plant Exchange Sunday, Sept. 11, 1-5;

Share Your Bounty, Find New Plants, & Celebrate!

Fall is an ideal time to plant for next season, as well as an ideal time to thin out those crowded plantings and bring your extras to the fall plant exchange at Tom's place, 2502 Waite Ave. in Kalamazoo.

There will be plants available from Nancy's gardens and from some Wild Ones plant rescues this summer. There will be refreshments and socializing as well as native plants.

We do ask that attenders should bring only plants native to Michigan; and all plants should be potted up carefully and identified with species labels. If in doubt as to whether your plant is a native, call or e-mail to inquire; or simply bring yourself, to enjoy and celebrate.

The house will be open for rest and conversation, and for shelter in the event of rain. As always, we proceed, rain or shine.

The location is 2502 Waite Ave., one block west of Oakland Drive and one block south of Winchell. We'll block off space near the driveway so you can drive up to drop off or pick up plants; but you may have to park some distance from the house.

Members of Wild Ones will be available to answer questions, help people set out the plants they bring, and choose appropriate plants to take home.

The purpose of the Plant Exchange is to foster natural landscaping with native plants. Here's a plant-exchange etiquette guide.

1. Respect and Share with Others

• If you see a special plant, but there are only 5, please don't take 2. Ask the person who brought it, or one of the expert-looking folks hanging about, what the chances are of getting more.

2. Respect Plants: give them the best possible chance of survival

• Plants might not get planted immediately. Please pot them up carefully so they can survive.

• Don't bring junk, which at a minimum includes nonnative invasives.

3. From Each Person According to Ability; To Each According to Need

• Just starting out? Don't have plants to bring? Of course you may take plants. In fact, that's one of the main purposes of the Plant Exchange. We all had to get started somehow, and when native plants start doing really well in your yard, bring some back.

Don't have plants but want to bring something? Some refreshments would be welcome.

If you're not already a member of Wild Ones, please consider supporting our important work by joining.

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Stuart Gage Speaks to Wild Ones Oct. 26 on Restoring Ecological Integrity in Michigan

For the first indoor Wild Ones program for the fall, Wednesday, Oct. 26, at 7 p.m., MSU entomologist Stuart Gage will tell a visual story of the history of Michigan's natural resource use as the foundation for understanding how the state needs to manage its natural resources for future generations. A key to Stu's analysis are maps of Michigan showing current land use and projecting future growth patterns by the years 2020 and 2040.

Stuart Gage is Emeritus Professor of Entomology at Michigan State University. He also holds Adjunct Professorships at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, and at the University of Alaska, in Fairbanks. His multidisciplinary research program has addressed such diverse issues as management of gypsy moth invasion into the Midwest, crop production patterns affected by climate across the U.S., and more recently, patterns of human

development in Michigan and beyond. As an entomologist, his contributions have ranged from modeling the effects of environmental conditions on pest and natural enemy ecology to examination of atmospheric transport of insects. Beyond entomology, his analysis has led to development of cutting-edge computational methods for prediction of U.S. biological events and trends. His current research examines new approaches to assess ecosystem health and prediction of future pressures on our natural resources using automated systems to record environmental sounds. Stuart has soundscape projects in the USA (Michigan, Wisconsin, and Alaska) and in Australia (Victoria, Queensland).

*Location: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 2208 Winchell, Kalamazoo.
Time: socializing, 6:30 p.m., program at 7, announcements and conversation following the program.*

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Final 2011 Program and Annual Meeting Brings Nate Fuller to Speak on “Threats to Biodiversity”

Wednesday, Nov. 16, at 7 p.m., Nate Fuller, Wild Ones member and Conservation and Stewardship Director for the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, will speak on “Invasive Species: Threats to Biodiversity” for the final program and annual members’ meeting for Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones.

There will be celebratory refreshments for the 12th birthday of the chapter, election of officers, and previews of the 2012 programs and field trips. Copies of Nancy and Tom Small’s new book, Using Native Plants to Restore Community in Southwest Michigan and Beyond, will be available (see news announcement below).

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Saturday, September 17, 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.

“CONSERVATION TO EDUCATION: MAKING THE LOCAL CONNECTIONS”

An Important Conference at Kalamazoo Nature Center

Robert Michael Pyle will be the keynote speaker at an all-day conference Saturday, Sept. 17, at the Kalamazoo Nature Center. The special event, co-sponsored by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones, the Nature Center’s Terry Todd Speaker Series, and the Chicago Academy of Science’s Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, will gather local and regional authorities on butterfly and habitat conservation and on involvement of youth in the experience and conservation of nature.

Theme for the conference will be “Conservation to Education—Making the Local Connections.” Topics will include pollinator habitat and conservation, the relation between pollinator and plant communities, the relation between classroom education and engagement with nature, the Leave No Child Inside Movement, and opportunities for citizen science.

*Robert Michael Pyle, an internationally recognized authority on butterflies and founder of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, is the author of 15 books, including *The Audubon Field Guide to North American Butterflies*; *The Thunder Tree: Lessons from an Urban Wildland*; and *Mariposa Road*, the narrative of his cross-country “Butterfly Big Year,” an attempt to see, in one year, every single one of the 800 butterfly species native to North America.*

*He’s also authored many hundreds of articles, poems, and stories in magazines and journals. His column, “The Tangled Bank,” featured in *Orion*, has expressed the wide range of his interests: *Nature Deficit Disorder* in both children and adults; the nature of true community; and the need for citizens to “re-invent” themselves, in the manner of Henry David Thoreau, as true amateurs, lovers of nature and “overseers of butterflies.”*

The full day of events at the conference will begin with Pyle’s keynote address, followed by a panel discussion, then a break for lunch, with six afternoon break-out sessions, in two parallel tracks of three sessions each, on “Education” and “Conservation.” The Nature Center staff has chosen to organize the conference on the model that Nancy Small and Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones developed for the Doug Tallamy conference at the Nature Center in 2008.

Special guest speakers will include Jennifer Hopwood, Midwest Coordinator for the Xerces Society; Doug Taron from Chicago’s Notebaert Nature Museum, and Thom Coder, Science Curriculum Coordinator for Mattawn Consolidated Schools. Many local educators, research scientists, and activists will also be panelists and workshop leaders. Whether you’re a teacher or an activist or both, there will be many speakers and events to engage you, with ample opportunity for interaction.

The conference will be free, except for the optional lunch prepared by Kalamazoo’s Peoples Food Co-op, but pre-registration is required. Space will be limited, so get yourself registered now. A schedule of the day’s program and online registration are available at naturecenter.org.

A selection of Pyle’s books and other related books on education and Lepidoptera will be available in the Nature Center bookstore, and there will be opportunities to get books signed by Pyle. Several local organizations and schools will have exhibit tables.

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NOW FOR THE REASONS WHY YOU NEED

TO COME ON OUT AND ATTEND THIS CONFERENCE

By Tom Small

If you haven't registered yet for the conference at the Nature Center Saturday, Sept. 17, I hope you will. In at least two ways, it's a "model" conference. First, it's modeled after the very successful conference that Nancy and Wild Ones organized at the Nature Center in October, 2008, featuring Doug Tallamy. Second, it's a model for the kind of "partnership" conference that national environmental and educational organizations have been promoting as part of a three-year campaign.

The Kalamazoo Nature Center has been a part of that campaign, the specific focus of which is butterfly conservation. But along with butterfly conservation goes habitat conservation and restoration, which is where Wild Ones comes in, along with many other organizations.

The two principal organizations behind the campaign are the Butterfly Conservation Initiative (BFCI) and the Imperiled Butterfly Conservation and Management program (IBCM). Together, they are working to bring together, in partnership, a broad range of governmental agencies, universities, zoos, nature centers, botanical gardens, and natural-history museums in a cooperative effort to educate the educators, both in their own institutions and in schools at all levels.

The effort grows out of a conviction that Lepidoptera and virtually all other pollinators are in dire peril as habitat loss and fragmentation, invasive species, and climate change accelerate. It's imperative that every environmental institution commit to the mission of the Butterfly Conservation Initiative: "the conservation of threatened, endangered and vulnerable North American butterflies and the habitats that sustain them, with a focus on recovery, research, and education."

Partner organizations in these efforts include the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, the National Wildlife Federation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign, the U.S. Forest Service, the McGuire Center for Lepidoptera Research at the University of Florida, and the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation (the organization founded 40 years ago by the conference's keynote speaker, Robert Michael Pyle).

The IBCM focuses on strengthening the ability of conservation institutions to play a strategic role in insect conservation, especially Lepidoptera. Two of the organizations participating in the program are the Chicago Academy of Sciences' Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum (a co-sponsor of the conference) and the Toledo Zoo, where Curator of Education Mitch Magdich has been working with Michigan experts on endangered Karner-blue butterfly recovery and on the key role Michigan can play in insect species recovery.

Of course, for Wild Ones, the importance, to the whole ecosystem, of insects and their habitats—especially the native plants they depend on—is quite familiar,

from Doug Tallamy's presentations at the 2008 Wild Ones conference and the 2009 Wildflower Association of Michigan conference. And the role of the National Wildlife Federation and Wild Ones in fostering urban, suburban, and rural wildlife habitat is crucial. But this conference carries Tallamy's message a step further in "Making the Local Connections" to link conservation and experiential education.

*Bob Pyle's keynote-address topic is "Kids and Other Species in the Neighborhood of Life," and he cooperates with Richard Louv and the No Child Left Inside movement. Indeed, the new edition of Pyle's memoir of his youth, *The Thunder Tree: Lessons from an Urban Wildland*, carries a foreword by Louv, author of the international bestseller *Last Child in the Woods* and more recently *The Nature Principle*. There are two tracks for the conference's concurrent afternoon sessions: "Conservation" and "Education," and there will be plenty of crossover from the one to the other, in Pyle's keynote, the panel discussion following, and the afternoon sessions.*

These are crucial times, and this will be a crucial conference. Whether you're a parent, a teacher, a naturalist, a butterfly-watcher, or a native-plant gardener, this conference will broaden your perspective, provide new insights, and suggest new methods and projects. You ought to be there. Register today: naturecenter.org.

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Nancy and Tom Small's Book on Native Plants and Restoring Community Available in October

Nancy Small spent the last two years of her life writing a book that would include much of Tom's and her writing over the course of their life together as co-founders and leaders of Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones. During the last months of her life in 2009 she made Tom promise over and over that he would finish the book. He has kept his promise. The book is at the printers and will be available by October.

*The title is *Using Native Plants to Restore Community in Southwest Michigan and Beyond*. Tom has revised and updated many of Nancy's plant lists for Wild Ones members, as well as many of the essays they wrote, separately or together, for various publications, including newsletters and journals of Wild Ones, Wildflower Association of Michigan, and Quaker Earthcare Witness, the Quaker environmental organization for the Americas. And there's much entirely new material.*

The book includes about 150 wonderful illustrations by five local and regional artists and scientific illustrators: Ladislav Hanka, Amelia Hansen, Elizabeth Henderson, and Nancy Stroupe, all from southwest Michigan, and Nancy Halliday, a scientific illustrator from Illinois. The book's design is by Linda

Judy, a professional book designer who recently retired as the designer for WMU's Medieval Institute Publications and Cistercian Publications.

All current members of Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones will get a free copy, which they may, if all goes according to plan, pick up beginning at the October meeting (no free copies will be mailed other than special presentation and review copies). Copies will also be available for sale, for \$25. The entire proceeds from sales and voluntary donations will be for the benefit of the Nancy Small Memorial Fund established by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones and for KAWO's educational projects.

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Other Events of Interest to Wild Ones

Saturday, Sept 10

Southwest Michigan Chapter, Michigan Botanical Club

Seidman Park: Goldenrod ID and Ecology

Pam Laureto, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Grand Rapids Community College, tour leader

There will be several different species of goldenrod including wetland, woodland, and old field species. There will be lots of other plants to see along the way but our focus will be the goldenrods, with some attention to goldenrod morphology and reproduction. Please meet at the south end of the park off of Conservation Road at 10 a.m. There is a parking lot and a pit toilet. Please bring water and wear good hiking shoes. We will be on trail a boardwalk for most of walk but we'll probably venture off trail for a brief visit to a fen - we probably won't get wet feet.

We will be carpooling from the West Main St. Target store parking lot, the south end across from Starbucks. Target's address is 5350 W. Main St., Kalamazoo. We will leave promptly at 8:50 a.m. since it will take about 1 hr 10 min to get there. Maps will be available at the carpool lot.

Monday, Sept. 19, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Axtell Creek sedge meadow

Your last chance to join in the fun and the cheerful company for a Wild Ones work day on Axtell Creek. We'll finish up on purple loosestrife, maybe tackle a couple of other invasives, and do some planting and seeding. We'll also survey the progress (you'll be surprised) and the problems on the sedge meadow at the foot of the Maple St. School playing fields. Meet in the parking lot behind the Farrer and Benefiel law office, corner of Howard and Crosstown.

Saturday, Oct. 1

Be the Change Day. www.bethechangeday.org/

“You must be the change you want to see in the world” —Gandhi

Monday, October 17, 6 p.m.

Southwest Michigan Chapter, Michigan Botanical Club

The Sensory World of Insect Pollinators

Ann Fraser, Kalamazoo College Biology Dept.

Oshtemo Public Library, 7265 W. Main St. (M-43) in Oshtemo

Thursday, Oct. 27, 7:30

Ann Arbor Wild Ones

Douglas Tallamy, speaking on "Are Alien Plants 'Bad'?"

Univ. of Michigan north campus, Ann Arbor

For details go to www.wildones.org/chapters/annarbor

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Meet Our Members—Ruth Caputo

by Dave Wendling

I met with Ruth at her church (Chapel Hill UMC in Portage), following our spring plant exchange this year. She’s been working with the Building and Grounds Committee at the church for the last few years establishing native gardens. She wants to teach the congregation about the beauty and sustainability of native plants. She showed me an island Savanna Garden in the front lawn of the church that contains June grass, sedges, purple cone flower, bergamot, butterfly weed, western sunflower, and others. In the back by the drive and parking area is a shaded area with wood poppy, wild geranium, columbine, and more. The gardens were created using organic methods without the use of any herbicides and with the help of Master Gardener volunteers.

Following this we went to her house. As I drove up it didn’t look any different from those of the neighbors, with a small lawn and ornamental plants along the front of the house. She pointed out that she has an organic lawn and uses a people-powered push lawn mower. She again stated that she is working for a more sustainable future. It’s when you step onto her pergola and look over her sunken backyard that a great transformation takes place! Her entire backyard is being replaced by natives. Her beautiful rain garden in full bloom first caught my eye. I’ve never seen a more beautiful rain garden. She also has a grass dominated prairie, and beyond that, a shade garden. The next time Wild Ones has a field trip to her house, don’t miss it!

Q. Can you tell us a little about your background?

A. I was born and raised in Spokane, Washington. Since both my parents loved the out-of-doors, we camped, fished, and generally enjoyed being out of doors. In the spring we would hunt for wild flowers, and come home with pie pans full of buttercup plants, cans full of dog-tooth violets, and hands full of yellow bells, shooting stars, and other flowers.

I was married to my husband Jim for 34 years, and I have two children, Amy and Joe, who live in the area, and a grandson, Dillon. Dillon and I are bird watching buddies, and go on Junior Audubon outings together.

Q. What's your occupation and your educational background?

A. I have a PhD in physical chemistry, and have taught college-level chemistry, worked as an environmental chemist, and worked for a pharmaceutical company (Upjohn etc.). I'm now retired.

Q. How did you become interested in nature, particularly native plants?

A. As I said, I grew up in a family that enjoyed being out of doors. My father was an outdoorsman who knew a lot about conifer forests, knowledge he shared with anyone who was interested. Discovering a nice patch of trillium was an occasion for delight. Finding a nice patch of huckleberries would result in serious picking, and some good eating.

Q. How did you find out about Wild Ones and when did you become a member?

A. Valuing native plants has always been a part of me. So when I found out about Wild Ones, it was an automatic fit. Don't remember when I joined – about five years ago?

Q. Can you tell us about your favorite native plant?

A. I don't really have a favorite native plant. I like lots of them. Trillium would be among my favorites.

Q. What appeals to you most about gardening with natives?

A. I came from a background that valued the natural world. And doing things that are good for the natural world suits my ideas of harmony and balance. I believe many people will move to practices that are more environmentally friendly after they become familiar with them. So my efforts to establish native plant areas in my yard and at my church are designed to show what can be done. The main benefits are actually to give me experience and help me learn. This also appeals to the scientist part of me. I've learned a LOT working with native plants, and have adjusted my ideas of "how a garden grows" to be more in line with the constantly-evolving nature of native plantings.

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SIGHTING AND INSIGHTS

Today I set about planting two spicebush shrubs I bought from Chad, both sizeable plants still in 3" pots. The roots of both wound tightly around themselves,

both inside and underneath the pots. Carefully, I cut away the flimsy plastic pots from around them.

Then, as I began to untangle and spread the roots, I released a powerful but delicate fragrance of spices. I had smelled something faintly like it before, simply by rubbing a leaf of spicebush. This was overwhelming, intoxicating. For a few moments nothing else existed except that aroma.

Fortunately, the roots were strong, thick, tightly tangled; so it took me a long time to free them, holding them up to my face, breathing in the delicious fragrance. Finally, I had foot-long strands of root, almost as long as the above-ground stems. Reluctant to give up my spicebushes to the earth but recognizing I couldn't put them under my pillow, I slowly planted them in a deep hole and watered them carefully.

I don't recommend digging up spice bushes to get high on the fragrance. But if you have the chance to comb through the roots of saplings as you plant, enjoy that wondrous experience as long as you can.

--Tom Small, Aug. 28, 2011

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Join in Collecting Native Prairie Seeds for State Parks

The State Park Stewardship Unit invites volunteers to harvest native prairie seeds at several State Parks and Recreation Areas throughout the month of October and in early November. The seed will be used to re-establish and restore tallgrass prairie, lakeplain prairie, and oak savanna ecosystems that have been damaged by invasive species.

Seed collections will take place in eight State Parks and Recreation Areas across southern Michigan. Join in for an enjoyable, easy activity for the whole family. Information, schedules, and registration forms at

www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-30301_31154_32311-34686--,00.html

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News from Faraway & Nearby

“Moving Planet” worldwide climate rally, Saturday, Sept. 24.

Local action at the Bank Street Farmers Market, Kalamazoo

By the time you read this newsletter, over 1200 people will have been arrested at the White House in a massive protest against the proposed Keystone XL pipeline, including 350.org's Bill McKibben and NASA's James Hansen.

There are two ways that you can stand in solidarity from wherever you are:

1. Sign a petition to President Obama to stop the Keystone XL pipeline
2. Send a letter. See the Center for Biodiversity website:
http://action.biologicaldiversity.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=7245
3. Take part in Moving Planet-- a worldwide climate rally on September 24 -- and move beyond all fossil fuels in the most visible, beautiful way possible. The Kalamazoo Moving Planet event is being organized by Jeff Spoelstra, who participated in the protests at the White House. Many of us know Jeff as the head of the Kalamazoo River Watershed Coalition. He asks that we bike or walk to the Bank Street Farmers Market on Saturday, Sept. 24, and sign in at the Moving Planet table between 7 and 11 a.m. There will be a group photo at 10 a.m.

You can sign up to support and participate at movingplanet.org

Building the Keystone XL pipeline is a terrible idea. The oil it will carry from Canada's tar sands will travel all the way from northern Alberta to the Gulf of Mexico. The tar sands are among the most carbon-intensive of all the fossil fuels and the second largest pool of carbon on earth after the oil fields of Saudi Arabia. The project already has the approval of the State Department. The final decision is entirely in the hands of President Obama. Before Jim Hansen, one of the world's foremost climate scientists, was arrested at the White House on Aug. 29, he stated that if we continue developing these unconventional energy sources, "it is essentially game over for the climate."

Monday, Oct. 31

Projected date for the birth of the seven billionth person on earth. Statistically, the probability is that this will be a boy, born in Uttar Pradesh, India.

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SEEDLINGS is edited by Tom Small and appears five times a year. This is the last regular issue for 2011. The first issue for 2012 will come early in January; deadline for submission is Friday, Dec. 30. Please send submissions, comments, and suggestions to Tom at yard2prairry@gmail.com.