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*Marsh Marigold (Caltha palustris) K. Patrie*

April 2022

**SEEDLINGS**

# Wild Ones|Kalamazoo Area Chapter

What more substantial service to conservation than to practice it on one's own land?--Aldo Leopold



*Bloodroot (Sanguinaria canadensis) K.Patrie*

Dear \*|FNAME|\*,

April is finally here! I've been holding out on sharing flower photos all winter to stay true to the season. Now we can revel in their beauty at long last - because spring ephemerals are on their way! How appropriate that Earth Day celebrations happen in April, when all of life seems to be celebrating.

This month we've got monarchs on our mind. How many of you have registered as a monarch waystation? Ilse gives us a nudge in that direction as well as insight into those little red beetles you've seen clustered on milkweed.

I'm happy to announce that we can finally see each other in person again! Monarch expert Karin Oberhauser will be joining us from Madison, WI to present her talk on April 27th. On April 30th there will be another chance to meet each other - at the Kalamazoo Nature Center for a community celebration of Tom Small. Read more about both below.

If visions of Milkweed and Monarda are dancing in your head, keep in mind that our annual [plant sale](#) will be held on June 18th at People's Food Co-op. This one-day event will be first come, first served. Also mark your

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calendar for the fun and lively spring plant exchange on June 5th. [More info](#)



I hope you enjoy this month's plant profile on Hazel, and the latest book review. I'd love to hear from you about what you've been reading, what you'd like to see here, and what you're excited about in your gardens and in the world. Drop me an [email](#)!

Warm sunshine and gentle rain,  
**Mel Luna**  
Editor

*Trout Lily (Erythronium americanum) M. Luna*



## Thank You!

On behalf of the Executive Committee we would like to thank the following people for their donations in 2022:

**Ruth Caputo, Noel Ocen-Gorgone, B. Schneider, Ilse Gebhard, Dave and Joan Wendling, Ann Fraser, Todd Stanford, The Wicks, Susan Bastek (in memory of Carol Rae Buck), Judy and John Dircks, Harry and Mary Bird, Petal Pushers Garden Club.**

As a small, local, all-volunteer run organization, each donation goes towards supporting community efforts to increase awareness of the importance of native plants, provide resources, and get native plants in the ground everywhere we can!

Our [website](#) has a new look! Now it's easier than ever to make a financial contribution. Just click on the donate button at the bottom of the home page.

**Donate**

## **Monarchs as a Flagship Species: Can Conservation Focused on One Species Benefit All?**

**April 27, 7pm**

**Karen Oberhauser, University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum**

Join us for our first in-person program this year at the Kalamazoo First United Methodist Church! These talks are always free, and everyone is welcome. Dr. Karen Oberhauser has been specializing in Monarchs since 1984. She describes her research field, conservation biology, as the science of hope. The challenges we face as we work to preserve biodiversity are steep, but our collective concern for monarchs and, by extension, the thousands of species with which they share habitats can provide a glimmer of hope in a complicated world. [Read more.](#)

Please note: Kalamazoo First UMC requires that we wear masks when we're in the church.

*Monarch on Stiff Goldenrod (Solidago rigida). Q. Edwards*



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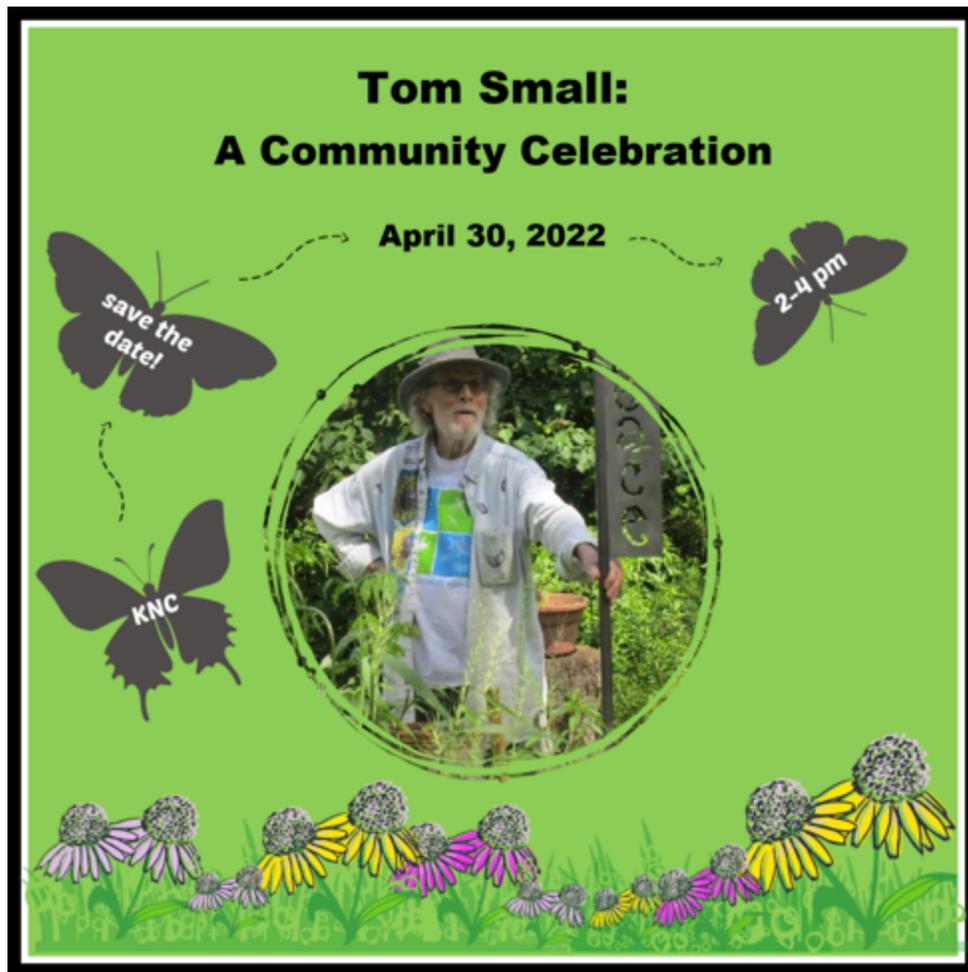
## **Visit Our YouTube Channel**

If you've missed any of our previous presentations, not to worry. Visit the KAWO YouTube channel, where you can view our programs at your convenience.

## **Click Here to visit our YouTube channel**

*You can also click on the small red YouTube icon above, underneath the Table of Contents.*

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Come Celebrate the Earth and Tom Small on April 30th, from 2-4pm at the Kalamazoo Nature Center's Barn! Tom himself will be presenting: "The Impossible Dream: Quest for the Peaceable Kingdom," followed by other presentations and tributes. This gathering for the community is being hosted by local environmental and arts groups to honor the work Tom as done for theater and on behalf of the more-than-human world. Come and bring your friends and family!

Walk the trails, enjoy live music, and celebrate spring. Donations are appreciated. KNC will also be accepting donations for a scholarship in Tom's honor. Keep an eye out for more info [here](#), or email Karin Larsen with questions and to RSVP [here](#).

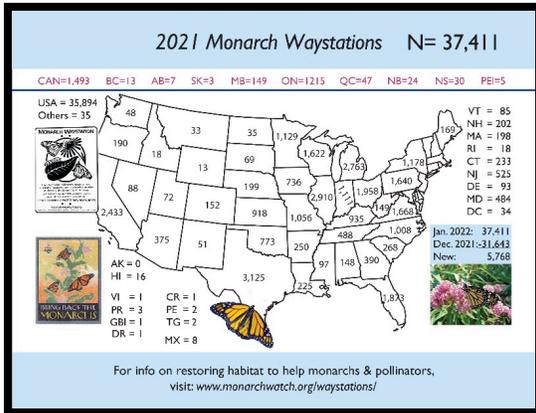
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## **Monarch Waystations - First Create, Then Register**

**Ilse Gebhard**

Each fall, hundreds of millions of monarch butterflies migrate from the United States and Canada to mountains in central Mexico where they spend the winter, to return to the southern US in spring. The monarch migration is one of the world's greatest natural wonders, but it is threatened by habitat loss at the overwintering grounds in Mexico and throughout their breeding range in the United States

and Canada. **We can counter the habitat loss by creating Monarch Waystations**, places that provide resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration.



Without milkweeds throughout their spring and summer breeding range in North America, monarchs would not be able to produce the successive generations that culminate in the migration each fall. By the same token, without nectar from flowers the fall migratory monarch butterflies would not be able to make their long journey to the overwintering grounds in Mexico and live off their stored fat during the winter months.

You can help preserve this wondrous monarch migration by creating Monarch Waystations of milkweeds and nectar plants in home gardens, at schools, businesses, parks, zoos, nature centers, along roadsides, and on other unused plots of land. It can be as simple as adding milkweeds and nectar sources to existing gardens or maintaining natural habitats with milkweeds. No effort is too small to have a positive impact.

Initiated in 2005, Michigan used to have the highest number of Waystations in the nation but the last few years we have fallen behind Texas and Illinois, and California is breathing down our neck to displace us from 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Once you have created your habitat, be sure to [register it](#) and encourage others to do the same.



## Are You Wild for Monarch Butterflies?

If So, We Need Your Help To:

- Table at Events
- Collect Milkweed Seed
- Transplant Milkweed Seedlings
- Prepare Seed Packets of Milkweed Seed
- Monitor Monarch Waystations

*To volunteer or for more information, contact Carol or Mike Klug at [Klug@mei.net](mailto:Klug@mei.net)*

*Monarch on Purple Coneflower (Echinacea purpurea). K. Patrie*

## Sharing the Milkweed Patch: Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle

Ilse Gebhard

Planting milkweed not only helps our beloved monarchs but also a number of other insects that are totally dependent on milkweed. One such insect is the Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle (*Labidomera clivicollis*). The common name is a misnomer as this beetle readily feeds on other milkweed species. I have found its elongated, orange eggs on Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) on a regular basis.

*Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle Eggs I.Gebhard*



The Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle has the typical beetle life cycle of egg, larva, pupa, and adult. This is the same life cycle as that of the monarch and is called complete metamorphosis. Its larvae go through 4 larval stages, called instars, one less than the monarch. The last instar falls to the ground to pupate.

*Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle Larvae I.Gebhard*



I wanted to follow the whole life cycle of the Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle, so I kept a few of the larvae in the jar in which I had been feeding them. Compared to monarch caterpillars and chrysalises, Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle larvae and pupae are rather homely and there is no dramatic transition from larva to pupa like with the monarch.

*Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle Pupae I.Gebhard*



The shiny red and black adult Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle, on the other hand, is very attractive in my estimation. It overwinters in leaf litter, one of uncountable species that do. While the larvae feed mostly on milkweed leaves, the adult also feeds on the flowers and can often be found hiding among them.



*Swamp Milkweed Leaf Beetle Adult I.Gebhard*

## **The Hazel Wand and Pilgrimage (Corylus americana)**

**Tom Small**



April is the time, says Chaucer, in his tales of the Canterbury pilgrims, when sweet showers pierce the drought of March “to the root” and bathe “every vein” in such moisture that the flower is “engendered” by a magical power. Then, he declares, folk long “to go on pilgrimages.”

*Hazel catkins in the snow. (Corylus americana) Pixabay*

To participate in that magical power of nature that “pricketh” them in their hearts to undertake a sacred journey, pilgrims carried a walking stick of hazel wood. So special was this wand that pilgrims often had it buried with them, for the journey after death.

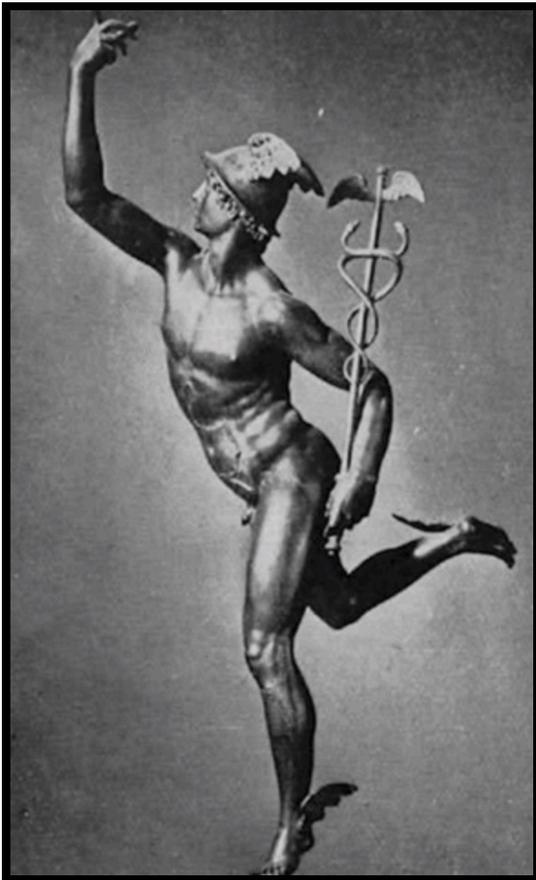
I wish I’d had such a walking stick when I participated in daily “Earth Pilgrim” walks on the Dartmoor in England with Satish Kumar. Perhaps it would have helped me keep up with the swift pace of that powerful walker, conditioned by his thousands of miles of peace walks in India, across all of Europe, and in the British Isles.

For Satish, every step “touches the earth” and is the “first step toward peace.” No destination, but always “on the Way.” And sitting quietly in the rain in Dartmoor’s ten-thousand-year-old oak forest was also pilgrimage—a journey, in harmony, into wholeness.



Why a hazel wand as emblem and carrier of that wholeness? For my Celtic ancestors, hazel (*Coll*) is the letter C in the ancient Ogham tree alphabet. Along with oak, ash, and holly (D, N, and T), it's a "champion" tree. Both wands and nuts of hazel are ultimate sources of mercurial energy, conferring powers of divination and clairvoyance—ability to see the future and the inward life of the earth and all things. Water dowzers use hazel to "see" beneath the surface, and the Ojibwe prize it for ceremonial drumsticks, attuned to rhythms of the earth.

*Hazelnut (Corylus americana) S. Ewbank*



Hazel's quicksilver energies are closely associated with the Greco-Roman god Mercury, or Hermes. His rod of hazel, twined with the caduceus, a double helix of serpents, symbolizes health and healing. Winged messenger from the gods, Hermes is the animating spirit manifest in all matter. As Mercurius, he is both beginning and culmination of the alchemical process of individuation that reconciles all oppositions, revealing the unity of yin and yang, male and female, darkness and light.

In our house, we are watched over by a "Herm," a traditional Greek roof tile with relief image of Hermes. More than just the souvenir of my bicycle journey on the Greek island of Crete, Herm guards our household well-being, our wholeness.

*Hermes (The Flying Mercury) by Giovanni da Bologna*

Perhaps above all else that endears hazel for me is its traditional associations with festive holiday and liberty. Freedom from oppressive authority—a bit of anarchic wildness. Until suppressed by the Protestant Reformation, enclosure and privatization of the commons, and the industrialization of labor, the gathering of hazelnuts in the forests of Britain was occasion for community celebration of nature's free gifts and the liberty to partake of them (which is in fact enshrined in the Forest Charter of 1217,

the little known and often violated companion to Magna Carta).

Reaction of the owner of Hatfield Forest to such an annual festival is typical: “the idle and disorderly Men and Women of bad Character come in large parties to gather nuts and in the evening take Beer and Spirits and Drink in the Forest which affords them an opportunity for all sorts of Debauchery.”

My favorite instance of defiance and the triumph of ancient liberties is Nutcrack Night. After trespassing and gathering the nuts, the villagers carry them to church and crack them noisily, *en masse*, during sermon.



So there are many reasons for cultivating and contemplating hazels. Not least of which, for us wild ones, is that their preferred native habitat is oak savanna, where they can form thickets. Their male catkins form in the fall, go dormant during winter, and fill with pollen in very early spring, with crocuses and pasque flowers.

*Hazel flowers & catkins. (Corylus americana) P. Schmiel*



Female stalkless buds look like tiny crimson brushes. Leaves open in early spring and remain as late as December. They remain compact, rarely taller than 10 to 20 feet high. You should protect young hazels from deer. You should have a pair for good pollination—and for remembrance of Mercurius—and Debauchery.

*Female hazel flowers. Rutgers.edu*

Embark for pilgrimage to Avalon, the Celtic Paradise where hazel nuts give life and health to gods and kings and all commoners—no exceptions. And remember: a hazel is never just a hazel.

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## **Book Review: Gathering Moss by Robin Wall Kimmerer**

**Mel Luna**

Gathering Moss is a love letter, a prayer book, a sacred song, and there is no better company than Robin Wall Kimmerer. She has the voice of a poet, the curiosity of a scientist and a wise worldview that can save us all. It's no secret that she is one of my heroes.

In this slim volume of twenty-one short essays she carries the reader in her breast pocket, close to her heart, as she lives the life of a mother, teacher, and impassioned bryologist. The collection's brevity belies the riot of intrigue that these stories encapsulate. She takes us around the world, to the very heart of it and back.

*Old growth mosses at home on a tree trunk. M.Luna*



In *City Mosses* I learned of aerial plankton, “the clouds of spores and pollen” circulating around the globe. In *Kickapoo* we watch the author struggle humorously to collect data from a boulder in the middle of a fast moving river. In *The Owner*, we are utterly horrified by the short sightedness of power and vanity. It's a collection with a vast emotional and topical range, yet consistently weaves a spell of interconnectedness and reverence.

In a recent lecture hosted by the University of Michigan's Native American Studies program, Kimmerer poignantly spoke to the need for a change in values - from a story of human exceptionalism (the fictional pyramid with man on top, rooted in linguistic imperialism) to honoring the truth of kin-centric relationships, that all beings have the same claim to life on earth. To view the recorded talk, [click here](#).

*Moss in the crack of a sidewalk. M.Luna*



This necessary shift in worldview is one that we Wild Ones are continually engaging in. It's a path we are creating, discovering, and walking together - with mentorship from all of Life's teachers, including the more-than-human beings themselves. That is something to celebrate!

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## Community Events of Interest

**April 1 - May 15:** Pierce Cedar Creek Institute's native plant sale ordering period. [Learn more.](#)

**April 5 - 9:00am:** Weekly [Kal-Haven Trail Walks](#) with the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo run

through May. This is a great way to meet friendly locals and peep spring ephemerals along the trail.

**April 16 - 8:30am-10:00am** - "Early Migrants at Kleinstuck Preserve" birding field trip with Donna Keller and Susan Schneider of the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo. [More details](#)

**April 18 - 6:30pm-8:30pm** - "Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers and Birds" Wild Ones River City Chapter (Grand Rapids) field trip to Hudsonville Nature Center led by Craig Elston. [More details](#)

**April 27 - 7:00pm** - "Monarchs as Flagship Species: Can Conservation Focused on One Species Benefit All?" a presentation with Karen Oberhauser at the First United Methodist Church, 212 S. Park Street, downtown next to Bronson Park. Hosted by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones. [Read more.](#)

**April 30 - 2:00pm - 4:00pm:** Celebrate Tom Small at the Kalamazoo Nature Center's barn (7000 N Westnedge Ave.) with presentations, tributes, live music, and lovely trails! [More info](#)

**May 1 - 11:00am-3:00pm:** 14th Annual Green-A-Thon & Sneak Peak Farmer's Market is a family friendly Earth Day event with exhibits, games and giveaways at Portage City Hall. [Details](#)

**June 18 - 10:00am-3:00pm:** Native Plant Sale at People's Food Co-op. This is Kalamazoo Area Wild One's only fund raising event for the year - all are welcome, tell your friends and neighbors! We will have a wide variety of plants, grasses, trees and shrubs grown by Wildtype nursery. [Details](#)

*Editor's note: If you know of any local events pertaining to native plants that you feel may interest our readers, please send them along to us at the address below. Thanks!*

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## **What's Happening at the National Office**

Check out our [National Office web site](#)

To read the most recent reports from the board of directors,

[Log In to the Member Only Area.](#)

**Thank you for your interest and support of Wild Ones!**

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SEEDLINGS is edited by Mel Luna. It appears mostly monthly.

The next regular issue will arrive in May. **Deadline for May issue is April 20.**

[Send Submission](#)

Contributing Editors:

Tom Small

Ilse Gebhard

**To share comments and suggestions, simply reply to this email.**

**We look forward to hearing from you!**

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and [www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes](https://www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes)



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