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Round-lobed Hepatica (Anemone americana) in a forest floor community. M. Luna

April 2023

SEEDLINGS

Wild Ones|Kalamazoo Area Chapter

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



Pasque Flowers (Pulsatilla patens) M. Luna

Dear *|FNAME|*,

I'm so excited for the return of the flowers! Last year the Pasque flowers pictured above started blooming mid-month. With modern cellphones it has become easier than ever to track the date of first seasonal sightings. If phenology interests you, Ilse shares some fun resources to do that below in one of her two articles on the beautiful (and delicious) Redbud.

Dr. Oberhauser was our featured speaker last April, and this month she's back in an article with sobering Monarch statistics and a call to action.

I hope you will join us at the Portage District Library to welcome this April's featured guest, Dr. Noland. All our talks are free, and it's joyful to gather together. Remember to pick up your copy of [this book](#) at the event if you are a new or renewing member.

Our Community Native Plant sale is coming up soon! It does take a village, so please consider signing up for a volunteer shift on May 20th. Ann Klobucar has the details on that below, and I'll definitely see you there.

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Grateful for you,

Mel Luna

Editor

Growing Wildflowers from Seed

April 26, 7pm-8pm at the Portage District Library

Tom Noland, Research Scientist, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ontario



Passionate about spring ephemerals? So is Dr. Tom Noland. He loves botanizing, and has grown his own wildflowers for more than thirty years!

His talk will focus on germinating, growing, and a bit of the medicinal folklore of native wildflowers. Visit the [KAWO website](#) for more details.

Cutleaf Toothwort (Cardamine concatenata) M. Luna

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.

Come Help Out with the Community Native Plant Sale!

Ann Klobucar, 2023 Plant Sale Committee

Come join the fun! Our Plant Sale committee needs help on sale day, May 20th. It's our biggest fundraiser of the year!

Several shifts are available between 7:30am and 2:30pm. Set-up starts at 7:30am. Several native-plant knowledgeable people are needed to be available 10am to 2pm to help shoppers with their selections. Also needed are people to help with check out, and packing up at the end of the sale from 2-3pm. Many hands make light work!



2022 Plant Sale A. Fraser

Meet people new (and not-so new) to growing native plants. Your knowledge is valuable in getting them started at their own homes. Learn more about some of the plants yourself! This is a big step towards our mission to spread the word about planting natives. So, grab a friend and sign up.

Click [here](#) for more info about volunteering at the plant sale. You can also send me an [email](#) for more information. See you at the sale!

Welcome!

As an all-volunteer organization, we are thrilled to welcome the new members of 2023.

Brian P., Cait T., Courtney R., Linda B., Gerald P., Lucetta L., Kelly F., Mary F., Madeline W., Lizz J., Belinda C., Annette M., Connie C., David D., Liz H., Mary P., Sue B., Lynn S., Mal H., Ashley C.Y., Danee K., Shirley W., Mary H., Laurie R., Hannah F., Carrie B., Susan S., Colleen C., Linda F., and Carla S., Caren D., Leah M.

You're a Wild One now, and Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones is yours. Consider this an invitation to reach out and jump in with questions, suggestions and enthusiasm. Your curiosity, connections, and compassion are what make this chapter shine. All aspect of KAWO can benefit from your participation and engagement, and it is our sincere wish and belief that the benefits go both ways.

***Phenology:* the study of phenomena or happenings. It is applied to the recording and study of the dates of recurrent natural events (such as the flowering of a plant or the first**

or last appearance of a migrant bird) in relation to seasonal climatic changes. (Britannica)

The Redbud Phenology Project

Ilse Gebhard



The Redbud Phenology Project, a Community Science (formerly known as Citizen Science) research project, is one of many projects coordinated by [Nature's Notebook](#) as partner of the [National Phenology Project](#).

I have participated in a number of Community Science projects over the years and the basic protocol for the [Redbud Phenology Project](#) is the easiest one, save the Great Sunflower Project where the deer ate my sunflower before it bloomed.

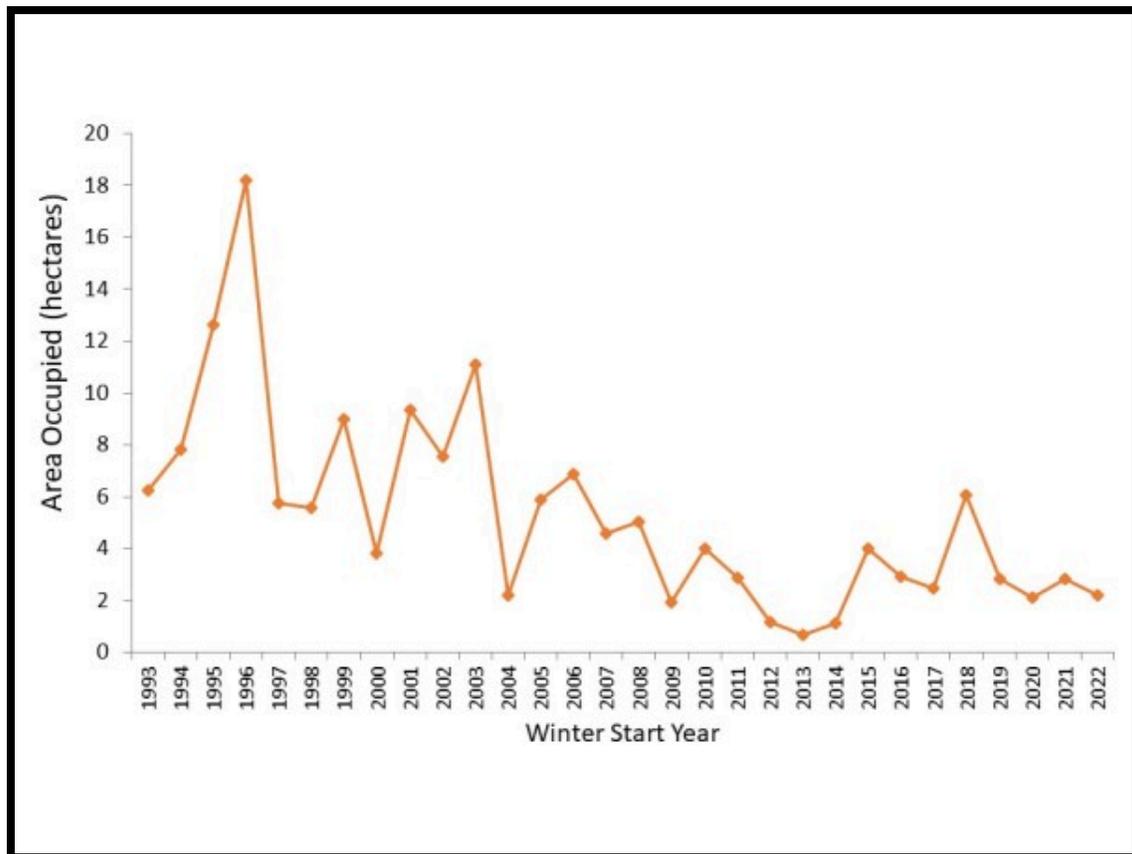
The basic protocol for the Redbud Phenology Project just asks 10 questions that are to be answered with a simple yes or no on weekly monitoring days. Additional information can be collected but is not required. For each question the project provides detailed descriptions and the data is entered online from a computer or smart phone.

Consider participating in the Redbud Phenology Project or one of the many other Nature's Notebook ones. If four residents in their 80s in a Retirement Community can do it, you can!

Monarch Winter 2022-23 Population Numbers Released

Dr. Karen Oberhauser, UW Madison Arboretum

On March 21, 2023, the World Wildlife Fund-Telmex Telcel Foundation Alliance (WWF) and the National Commission of Protected Natural Areas in Mexico (CONANP), released data from the winter 2022–23 monarch butterfly population counts. At the wintering sites in central Mexico, monarch population size is compared from year to year by the number of hectares (one hectare = 2.5 acres) occupied by trees containing monarchs. WWF and CONANP have been monitoring this area since 2004, with similar data from 1993-2003 collected by the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MBBR). While the number of monarchs in a hectare varies from year to year and is difficult to estimate, our best estimate is that the average is about 21 million.

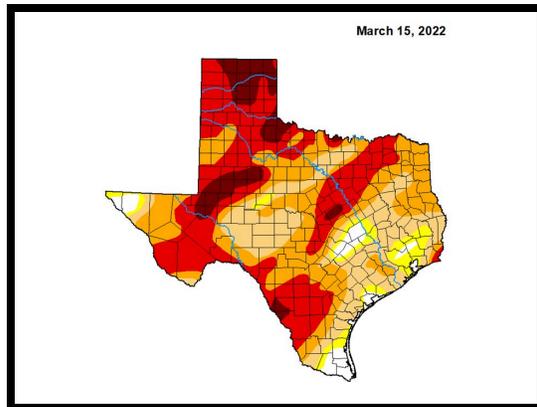


In December 2022, monarchs occupied 2.21 hectares, compared to 2.84 hectares at the same time in 2021, or a 22 percent decrease. The average for the past decade is 2.75 hectares, and the population has been declining since we began measuring it (see graph).

The amount of summer breeding habitat available for monarchs sets an upper limit, or ceiling, for how many monarchs travel to Mexico at the end of summer. The number of migrating monarchs varies, up to that value, depending on weather conditions. We probably got close to the ceiling in summer 2018, leading to the largest winter colonies in over a decade. Weather conditions that spring, summer, and fall were good for monarchs.

Before the advent of genetically modified herbicide-tolerant crops, corn and soybean fields contained a lot of milkweed, monarchs' larval host plant. From about 1999 through 2007, the amount of breeding habitat was drastically reduced by increased use of herbicide-tolerant crops and subsequent loss of milkweed in corn and soybean fields. Monarchs used milkweeds in corn and soybean fields extensively for egg laying, and their loss is reflected in a drop in monarch numbers over this period.

After about 2010, almost all corn and soybean fields contained herbicide-tolerant crops. Since then, habitat availability hasn't changed a lot, and the winter monarch population fluctuates around an average just under 3 hectares – it is higher when weather conditions are ideal for monarchs, and lower when they're not very good. The lower numbers in winter 2022-2023 reflect what we observed in the northern breeding grounds last summer.



A 2021 analysis shows that the most important factor affecting winter numbers is summer population size. Summer population size is driven by several factors, but the important is weather in the southern United States in the spring—when monarchs are migrating north from wintering in Mexico. Summer weather, overall herbicide use in crop fields, and late winter population size are also contributing factors. Hotter, drier, colder, or wetter conditions in the southern U.S. are bad when monarchs are moving through. Last spring was very dry – see the drought monitor map from a year ago. One effect of climate change is more extreme weather variability, which may pose additional challenges to monarchs.

The best way to support monarchs is to raise the ceiling by creating more habitat. That means an all-hands-on-deck approach: restoring habitat in our yards, places of work, schools, and churches; along roadsides, utility rights-of-ways, and railroads; and in areas currently used for crops that aren't very productive. This work supports monarchs and thousands of other species in the same habitats.

Signs of Spring: *Eastern Redbud*

Ilse Gebhard

Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) is my favorite spring-flowering small tree. It ranges from Hudson Bay in Canada all the way to the southern tip of Florida. To escape winter for a few weeks, some years Russ and I would drive to the Florida Panhandle. Sitting in a car for two days on the interstate got very boring despite audio books, podcasts, NPR, bird trivia flash cards. For most of the way south the scenery in winter is also rather drab. To entertain myself on the way south I would look for the first Redwing Blackbird and the first Redbud in bloom, and on the way back, for the last Redbud and the first vestige of snow. The result of course varied depending if it was January, February or March.

Eastern Redbud (Cercis canadensis) NC State Extension



Moderately shade tolerant, Redbud is slow growing and relatively short-lived, with trees beginning to flower when 4-5 years old. Its optimal habitats are stream borders, floodplains and bottomlands but it thrives on many other soils. We had a group of them growing on the edge of our pond and they, along with their reflection on the water, were a lovely sight.

Morning sun on pond
Few ripples disturb surface
Which redbud is real?

The Redbud flower shape is typical for the Pea Family to which it belongs. If you look closely, the 5-toothed calyx is dark red and the 5 petals are rose, giving it the bicolored appearance. They are scattered along the branches (rarely along the trunk as well) and appear just before or with the leaves. The flowers are bisexual, meaning that they have both male and female reproductive organs (stamens and pistils) in the same flower. They provide nectar to insects that emerge in early spring which pollinate them.



Redbud Flower H.L. Metzman

Like other legumes, the 10-12 redbud seeds are contained in a pod. The pods are reddish brown and are borne in clusters along the branches. They are pointed at both ends and about 2-3 inches long. Persistent and easily seen in winter, they provide food for Northern Bobwhite, a species that has become quite rare in Michigan.

Female Northern Bobwhite Quail B.E. Small



Redbud leaves are toothless, heart-shaped or rounded and are dark green above but paler below. This is illustrated by the folded-over leaf made by a moth caterpillar appropriately called Redbud Leaf Folder (*Fascista cercerisella*). The moth lays an egg on a leaf and when the caterpillar emerges, it folds the leaf and spends its days inside the fold eating the green surface of the leaf.

A sign of the Redbud Leaf Folder. I. Gebhard



It pupates within the fold, from which the moth emerges and flies off. The little black specks are its poop, called frass. I have checked many folded leaves but most of them only had frass inside. Once I observed a titmouse probing into a folded leaf with its beak but I could not tell if its luck was better than mine.

Redbud Leaf Folder with frass. J. Gallagher



Community Events of Interest

April 5 - 7:00pm: Our Planet Live in Concert at Miller Auditorium. [More info](#)

April 10: Last day to order tree seedlings through the Kalamazoo Conservation District Reforestation Seedling Sale. [Learn more.](#)

April 13 - 1:00pm-3:00pm: "Creative Wilderness with Ladislav Hanka" an in-person workshop at the Kalamazoo Nature Center. [Read more.](#)

April 14 - 2:00pm-4:00pm: Volunteer with KAWO's Community Projects. It's the first work party of the year, at Axtell Creek. [Read more.](#)

April 17 - 6:30pm-8:00pm: "Planning, Planting and Maintaining Your Native Garden - Ask the Professionals" an in-person event hosted by River City Wild Ones (Grand Rapids). [Read more.](#)

April 22, 26 - 8:30am-10:30am: "Garlic Mustard & Dame's Rocket Pulling Day" at the Kalamazoo Nature Center. For more dates and to learn more, click [here](#).

April 22 - 11:00am-7:00pm: Kalamazoo Earth Day Festival is back! Learn more [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). KAWO will be tabling at Woods Lake from 2-4pm - come say hello!

April 22 - 10:00am-1:00pm: Barry County Business & Community Expo coincides with Earth Day in Hastings. KAWO will be tabling at the Hastings High School. [More info](#)

April 26 - 2:00pm-4:00pm: Volunteer with KAWO's Community Projects at Glen Park. [Read more.](#)

April 26 - 7:00pm-8:00pm: "Growing Wildflowers from Seed" an in-person event with Dr. Tom Noland. Hosted by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones. [More info](#)

April 28 - 6:00pm-8:00pm: "Arbor Day Big Tree Hunt", an in-person event at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. [Register here.](#)

May 1 - 3:30pm-5:00pm: "Supporting Pollinators One Native Planting at a Time" (in-person and on Zoom) with Beth Clawson at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. This is a free event sponsored by Operation Pollination and the Hastings Rotary Club. [Register here.](#)

May 13 - 1:00pm-4:00pm: Spring Wildflower Field trip at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute's Little Grand Canyon. Registration is required and limited to 25 participants. Contact [Mike Klug](#).

May 20 - 10:00am-2:00pm: Mark your calendar for KAWO's 9th annual Community Native Plant Sale! [More info](#)

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!*

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!

Not a member? [Click Here](#) for information on how you can support Wild Ones.

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:

Ilse Gebhard

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

We look forward to hearing from you!

Find more information and news at www.KalamazooWildOnes.org

and www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes



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