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*Ironweed (Vernonia sp.) at Portage District Library's Monarch Waystation. M. Luna*

July 2023

# SEEDLINGS

# Wild Ones|Kalamazoo Area Chapter

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



*Queen of the Prairie behind Paris Cleaners. M. Luna*

Dear \*|FNAME|\*,

The fireflies have begun to take flight! A great place to view them is the Kalamazoo Nature Center's Prairie Pathway. Help these gentle beings find their mates by keeping outdoor lights off at dusk. More tips below!

We love to support budding ecologists, so it's a pleasure to share a recent update from the Heronwood Field Project. You'll also find articles from Ilse on Underwing Moths and one of their host plants, Hawthorn.

Is your camera roll filling up with all the wonderment of summer bugs & blooms? Consider sharing them with us [here](#), or submitting them to the [National Wild Ones Photo Contest](#) which opens today!

Our program at the end of the month takes us

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[out into the city](#) to visit a variety of native plant gardens being tended by organizations large and small. Until then, here is [some inspiration](#) on what collective organizing can accomplish in a municipality - could Kalamazoo be next?

With love,

**Mel Luna**  
Editor

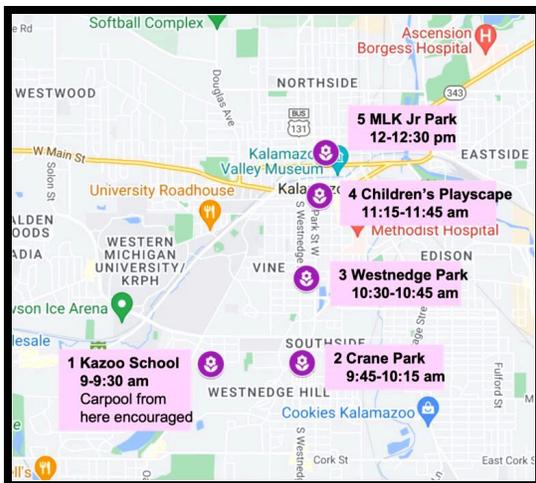


*Rattlesnake Master (Eryngium yuccifolium) Q. Edwards*

## **A Tour of Kalamazoo Native Plant Gardens**

**July 29, 9am-12:30pm**

*Ruth Caputo, Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones*



In our July 29 field trip you will have the opportunity to view and learn more about gardens in five areas of the city that are supported by different organizations, neighborhood groups, and volunteers.

[Read more.](#)

The tour will begin at Kazoo School at 9 am and move toward downtown, ending at Martin Luther King Jr Park around 12:30 pm.

**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.

**In general,**

# **FIREFLIES**

**need 4 things:**



**FOOD (slugs, snails, worms)**



**SHELTER (like leaf litter & trees)**



**MOISTURE**



**PROTECTION (from Pesticides,  
Foot Traffic & Mowing)**

Visit the Homegrown National Park website and social media pages for loads of videos and inspiration [here](#).

## **Underwing Moths Hide Their Flash**

**Ilse Gebhard**

There is a group of moths called Underwings (genus *Catocala*). At rest, the forewings have patterns that resemble tree bark. But as the common name implies, it is their hindwings, all black or brightly colored with 2 or 3 black bands, that makes them so “flashy”. It is speculated that the flashing of the hindwings startle predators when the well-camouflaged moths are discovered at rest on tree trunks or branches.

Somebody had real fun naming these moths and several patterns emerge. For example,



there are the Consort, Little Wife, Wayward Nymph, Old Maid, Widow, Oldwife, Bride,

*Hawthorn Underwing Moth I. Gebhard*

Mother, Darling, Sweetheart, Delilah, Magdalen, Little Nymph, and Girlfriend. Another pattern is Betrothed, Once-married, Joined, Married, Connubial. Or how about Penitent, Mourning, Dejected, Inconsolable, Sad, Tearful.

Over the years I identified five moth species in the *Catocala* genus – The Penitent (*C. piatrix*), Darling Underwing (*C. cara*), The Sweetheart (*C. amatrix*), Woody Underwing (*C. grynea*), and Hawthorn Underwing (*C. crataegi*). Three of the species (Penitent, Darling, Sweetheart) I found only as the adult moth while the other two (Hawthorn and Woody) I found as caterpillars and successfully raised to the adults.

The Penitent, Darling, and Sweetheart, with average wingspans of 3.15, 3.19 and 3.43 inches respectively, are three of the largest underwings found in our area. Host plants for Darling and Sweetheart are poplar and willow, while Penitent feeds on a greater variety of deciduous trees. I found these moths on the outside of our house where I photographed them. They kept their hindwings hidden under the forewings and I only got glimpses of their colorful hindwings as they flashed them when prodded. Luckily, I was able to identify them just from their forewing patterns.



*Darling (left) and Sweetheart (right) Underwing moths I. Gebhard*

I found the caterpillars of the Hawthorn and Woody underwings on the crabapple tree by our front door. These two species are considerably smaller than the other three at 1.93 inches average wingspan. While their taste in food is similar the Woody Underwing feeds on cherry and plum in addition to apple and hawthorn that the Hawthorn Underwing feeds on.



*Woody Underwing Caterpillar and Moth I. Gebhard*

Resources used:

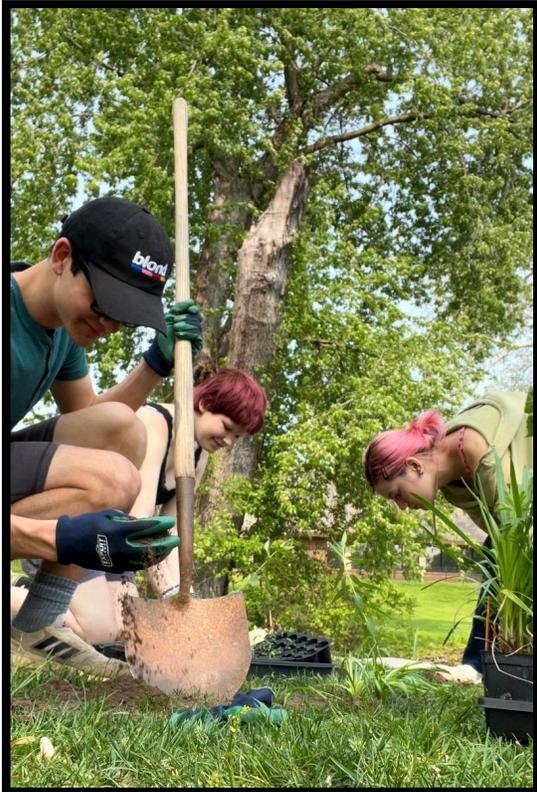
*Peterson Field Guide to Moths of Northeastern North America* by David Beadle and Seabrooke Leckie.

*Owlet Caterpillars of Eastern North America* by David L. Wagner, Dale F. Schweitzer, J. Bolling

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## **Kalamazoo Nature Center's Heronwood Field Station Project**

Sam Skrceny, Peter McCarren, Lauren To, Anna Priest, Selah Miller



In our Conservation Biology course, we learned about the importance of riparian areas and about the benefits of native plants. In class, we were given the task to design and implement a project that improves water quality in Kalamazoo, so our group decided to create a project to help restore a riparian area on the Kalamazoo River. To do that, we cleaned up the area and planted native wetland plants along the river. Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones kindly offered us a donation to be able to buy over 30 wetland plants, including blue flag iris, blazing star, and milkweed species. These native plants will provide wildlife refuge, filter pollutants, and help to stabilize the river, which benefits the entire Kalamazoo River watershed. Thanks again for your donation, Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones!



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## The Genus Crataegus: The Hawthorns, Haws, Thorns, Thorn-Apples

Ilse Gebhard, photos by R. Schipper

The genus *Crataegus* is a confusing one and my *Michigan Trees* book by Barnes and Wagner lumps them together and just describes some of their general characteristics. The hawthorns are generally low, wide-spreading trees or shrubs, 3 to 24 feet high and as the common names indicate, they are usually armed with stiff, sharp thorns.



*Dotted Hawthorn (Crataegus punctata)*

*Blossoms and unripe fruit below.*

The whitish or pinkish flowers appear in May or June, with or after the leaves, and are insect pollinated. The fruit is red to yellow, roundish to pear-shaped, with 1-5 hard pits containing the seeds and flesh that is usually dry and mealy, but may be sweet and succulent in some species. Both birds and mammals eat the fruit and disperse the seeds widely.



Hawthorns are abundant in the southern Lower Peninsula and occasionally found in the Upper Peninsula. They are shade intolerant and therefore often found in open, disturbed sites like old fields, pastures, cutover forests and along roads and streams. Their showy and abundant flowers and attractive fruit make some of the species desirable as ornamentals in parks and gardens.



A mature hawthorn thicket presents one of the most formidable barriers to human intruders and provides excellent habitat for nesting birds. Among the most common nesters are mourning doves, black-billed and yellow-billed cuckoos, willow flycatchers, gray catbirds, brown thrashers, yellow warblers, and Northern cardinals. Caterpillars of several moth species feed on hawthorns, among them

hummingbird clearwing (*Hemaris thysbe*), Eastern tent caterpillar (*Malacosoma americanum*), and several species of underwings (*Catocala*), a ready food supply for birds to feed their young. And as the fruit ripen in late summer/early fall watch for catbirds, bluebirds, robins, waxwings and fox sparrows feasting on them.

**Session 1 of 6**  
**Larry Weaner**

**Foundations of Ecology-Based Design**

July 11, 2023

**Session 2 of 6**  
**Larry Weaner**

**The Open Landscape: Meadows, Old Fields, and Shrublands**

July 18, 2023

**Session 3 of 6**  
**Larry Weaner**

**The Canopied Landscape: Woodlands, Edges, and Hedgerows**

July 25, 2023

**Session 4 of 6**  
**Larry Weaner**

**The Artistic Overlay: Making "Wild" Legible**

August 8, 2023

**Session 5 of 6**  
**Ian Caton**

**Plants of the Open Landscape: Meadows, Old Fields, and Shrublands**

August 15, 2023

**Session 6 of 6**  
**Ian Caton**

**Plants of the Canopied Landscape: Woodlands, Edges, and Hedgerows**

August 29, 2023

**NDAL** New Directions in the American Landscape

**6-PART, VIRTUAL INTENSIVE COURSE**

WHERE SCIENCE MEETS PRACTICE

6-Session Bundle - \$585  
Individual Sessions - \$118 each

Register at NDAL.org  
or Scan QR code

Co-sponsored by

**Bonus**  
**Larry Weaner & Ian Caton**

**Office Hours**

November 14, 2023

## Community Events of Interest

**July 11:** Virtual course begins with New Directions in the American Landscape. See flyer above.

**July 17 - 6:30pm-7:30pm:** Pollinator Garden Tour of the Monarch Waystation at Portage District Library. [Register here.](#)

**July 19 - 10:00pm-12:00pm:** Volunteer with KAWO's Community Projects at the Paris Cleaners wetland planting. [Read more.](#)

**July 19 - 10:00pm-3:00pm:** Wild Rice Management Workshop hosted by Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. [More details.](#)

**July 19 - 5:00pm-6:45pm:** Annual Native Plant Sale/Fundraiser for River City Wild Ones (Grand Rapids). Online pre-sale open now. [More details.](#)

**July 22- 10:00am-12:00pm:** "Cedar Swamp Stroll" at Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. Followed by the "Prairie Fen Promenade" in August. [More info](#)

**July 29 - 9:00am-12:30pm:** A Tour of Kalamazoo Native Plant Gardens with Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones. [Read more.](#)

**July 29 - 11:00am-4:00pm:** Monarch Festival at Love Creek Nature Center. [Read more.](#)

**September 9 - 1:00pm-5:00pm:** KAWO's Annual Fall Plant Exchange. [Read more.](#)

*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!**

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

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**SEEDLINGS** is edited by Mel Luna. It appears mostly monthly.  
The next regular issue will arrive in August. **Deadline for August issue is July 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](http://www.KalamazooWildOnes.org)  
and [www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes](https://www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes)



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