



*Moonseed Vine blossom (Menispermum canadense)*

June 2018

## SEEDLINGS

### **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

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[In This Issue](#)



Illustration by Amelia Hansen, *Hoary Vervain*.

Spring Plant  
Exchange

Early Summer  
Events

Plant of the Month

Moonseed Larval  
Host

Quotations for  
Contemplation

Community Events

Contact Wild Ones



Share



Forward

Dear \*|FNAME|\*,

It's early summer, and the native plants are gearing up for full bloom!

I hope you'll come out and join us at our Spring Plant Exchange. Or on a Field Trip. It's great to be outdoors getting acquainted with others who share an interest in native plants.

I appreciate the generous knowledge shared by those who have been around the native plant block a few times more than I. Without their help, I'm quite sure my gardens would not be doing as well as they are.

Wishing you the Best Native Garden ever,

*Kim Patrie*

*Co-Editor*

Photo: D. Gordon E. Robertson - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=27437117>



26th Annual  
Spring Plant Exchange  
**Find New Native Plants,**  
**New Friends**  
***Sunday, June 3***

**Tom, Ruth, and the Wild Ones invite you to the 26th annual Spring Plant Exchange!** Held at Ruth and Tom's house, 2502 Waite Ave., Kalamazoo, on Sunday, June 3, from 1 to 5 p.m. The exchange will offer numerous plants from Tom and Ruth's gardens, as well as plants brought by other Wild Ones members and supporters. In keeping with principles we've always emphasized, it's not necessary to bring a plant in order to take one; and no plants will be for sale. [More info...](#)

**Nate Fuller: Invasive Plants Field Trip**  
***Tuesday, June 5***

By Tom Small

## Dame's Rocket

*(Hesperis matronalis)* resembles native Woodland Phlox. Clues to identification: Dame's rocket has alternately arranged leaves and four petals per flower, while phloxes have opposite leaves and five petals.

Image by Gregory Phillips, June 2004., CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=709496>



**Nate Fuller's** April Wild Ones indoor program provided not only an overview of “Invasive Plants on the Move” but a clear rationale of why the work of Wild Ones is so vital to the community of life in the Kalamazoo area, our home. Nate brought his 20 years of experience in conservation of local natural areas to the largest crowd so far this year for a Wild Ones program.

Nate’s message at the April meeting was basically very simple. We fight to eliminate invasive plant species from our properties and from natural areas not because they are exotic or alien or because they offend our refined tastes or sensibilities. We eliminate them because otherwise they take over large areas and exclude virtually all other species. Thus they suppress, degrade, and ultimately destroy a local ecosystem.

Instead of a rich diversity of plants, animals, microbes and fungi, instead of a resilient community, we’re left with a virtual monoculture that supports very little of the wildlife essential to the health, integrity, and adaptability of the systems on which all life, including human life, depends.

Nate strongly recommended that for the latest information about not just the usual suspects, like Japanese knotweed or buckthorn, but also about new arrivals, like European frog-bit, that we consult the [Michigan Invasive Species Information Network](#).

The June 5 follow-up field trip to Nate's April program will take us to the [Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy’s Bow-in the Clouds Preserve](#). The preserve, a local wetland and woodland area, features improved nature trails and a boardwalk through the wetland area. Established by the Sisters of St. Joseph over 100 years ago, SWMLC volunteers and staff have cleared out areas overgrown with invasives to reveal magnificent 200-year-old oaks and hickories and remnants of an original oak savanna ecosystem in the surrounding upland areas. [Read more...](#)



## **Black Swallow Wort**

*(Vincetoxicum nigrum)*

Part of the milkweed family, this invasive vine resembles milkweed, but is toxic to monarch larva.

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## **Dave Wendling: Mosses & Ferns Field Trip** *Saturday, June 23*

Dave Wendling will facilitate this informative trip as a follow-up to his March program on the early land plants. We will visit Dowagiac Woods to see some of the common Bryophytes (Mosses and Liverworts) as well as the great diversity of ferns. We will learn how to use the [Fern Finder](#) to identify the ferns. Along the way Dave will point out some of the common Mosses and Liverworts.

[More info...](#)



*Sensitive Fern (Onoclea sensibilis)*

Photo courtesy of [Michigan Wildflowers](#). Used by permission.

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## **Plant of the Month: Moonseed Vine**



## **Moonseed vine**

(*Menispermum canadense*) is a native vine with interesting lobed leaves, tiny white flowers and dark fruit. All parts of the plant, and especially the fruit, are considered toxic. Moonseed is dioecious (male and female flowers are on separate plants.) Though the flowers are similar in appearance, the blue-black berries appear only on female plants. Crescent shaped seeds give the plant its name.

***Moonseed Vine in spring (June) bloom. See photo at top of email for a closer look.***

*Photo by Ilse Gebhart*

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## **Moonseed Vine Host to Moth Caterpillars**

By Ilse Gebhard

Not all bird droppings are what they seem. Many butterfly & moth larva resemble bird droppings, as I found out one year in June.

There is an area at the edge of our pond where Moonseed vines grow. Though native, they spread considerably. Moonseed flowers are unisexual, and the male (staminate) flowers are not on the same plant as the female (pistillate) flowers. I examined the 1/8" flowers to see if I could tell male and female apart when I noticed some bird droppings on the leaf stems.

Somehow that did not seem right, and on closer inspection I found them to be caterpillars. I looked at other species of plants in the area, but only found the caterpillars on Moonseed. I concluded that they were Moonseed specific feeders. "Go to it cats," I said, "and keep those plants in check."

The shape of the brown, tan, gray and white caterpillars is slender, and they only have two pair of mid-abdominal prolegs instead of four. This reduction in prolegs enables them to curl up their mid-section like inchworms or loopers do, and makes them look more like bird droppings than when they are stretched out.

I brought nine of the caterpillars indoors to raise in pint jars, and all of them formed cocoons in a couple of days.

About two weeks later, moths emerged from six of the cocoons. I was able to identify the moths using Covell's [Eastern Moths Field Guide](#), and not surprisingly they are called Moonseed Moths. According to David L Wagner in [Caterpillars of Eastern North America](#) the Moonseed moth is in the *Catocala* genus. He states that they are dietary specialists, supporting the conclusion I had already reached about my Moonseed moth caterpillars.

Next time you observe bird droppings on a plant, don't be too quick about assumptions!

Photos below: Moonseed Moth Larva, and Cocoon. *Photos contributed by Ilse Gebhart*



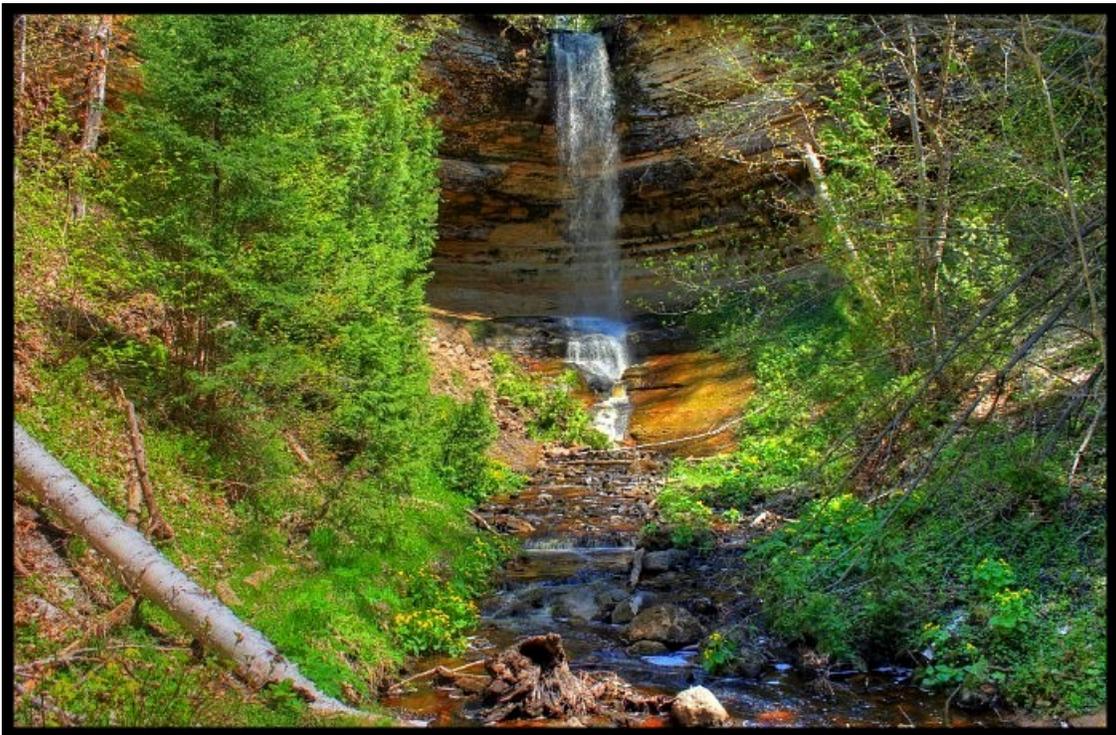
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### *Please Note: Change of Date for Fall Plant Exchange*

Due to a scheduling conflict, we've had to change the date for the Fall Plant Exchange to the same weekend as last year. We'll see you on **Sunday, August 26, from 1 to 5 p.m.**, at Tom and Ruth's house and gardens, 2502 Waite Ave., Kalamazoo.

**Please note and make the change in your calendars.**

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In indigenous ways of knowing, it is understood that each living being has a particular role to play. Every being is endowed with certain gifts, its own intelligence, its own spirit, its own story. Our stories tell us that the Creator gave these to us, as original instructions. The foundation of education is to discover that gift within us and learn to use it well.

--Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Gathering Moss*

Photo via [Good Free Photos](#) Munising Falls at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore

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## Community Events of Interest to Wild Ones

**June 3** - 1 to 5 p.m. - [Wild Ones 26th Annual Spring Plant Exchange](#)

Ruth and Tom's house, 2502 Waite Ave., Kalamazoo.

An exchange--no plants for sale. Limited to plants native to Michigan. Lots of information about the value of native plants to pollinators and native wildlife. Assistance in choosing plants appropriate for your property.

Your first time? No plants to exchange? Then bring some healthy snacks to share, take some plants home, and get started. Rain or shine, we proceed.

**June 6** - [Michigan Federation of Garden Clubs](#) Annual Conference, Radisson Hotel, Kalamazoo.

Three Wild Ones will be presenters at the conference: Heather Catania, Ilse Gebhard, and Tom Small.

**June 13-15** - [Orbis Environmental Consulting](#) botanists Scott Namestnik and Brad Slaughter are leading a three-day plant identification workshop in northern Indiana. The focus of the workshop will be plants found in wetlands and adjacent uplands. 8am to 5pm each day.

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**SEEDLINGS** is edited by Tom Small and Kim Patrie. It appears five times a year, with a few additional brief supplements.

The next regular issue, for **July-Sept., 2018**, will come early in July.

**NOTE: Deadline for submission is Friday, June 15. Send submissions to these addresses:**  
[yard2prairy@gmail.com](mailto:yard2prairy@gmail.com) and [safiraraks@gmail.com](mailto:safiraraks@gmail.com)

**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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