



Pasqueflower (*pulsatilla patens*)
Photo courtesy Missouri Botanical Gardens

March 2019

SEEDLINGS

Wild Ones|Kalamazoo Area Chapter

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

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Seedheads of Pasqueflower *Photo: MO Botanical Gardens*

Plant of the Month: Pasqueflower

(Pulsatilla patens)

Also known as Eastern or American Pasqueflower, this early spring bloomer is native to many areas of the world with temperate to cool climates. White, light blue, or purple blooms often appear before the snow has melted, followed by mounded, feathery leaves. *(See top photo)* The stems of the flowers grow taller as the plant matures, and produce interesting seed heads. It prefers sunny, dry soil but can tolerate a small amount of shade.



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March Program: Reconciliation Ecology *Restoring Biodiversity Where We Live*

March 27, Dr. David Warners, Biology Dept., Calvin College

Reconciliation ecology requires a re-orientation where people make a conscious effort to share their spaces with the broader creation. Plaster Creek Watershed in metropolitan Grand Rapids, Michigan is a degraded area where the Plaster Creek Stewards are engaged in reconciliation ecology. Join us on March 27 to hear about some of the successes, challenges, and the vision of the Plaster Creek Stewards for a hopeful future for this 14-mile creek, its watershed, and all its inhabitants. [More Info](#)

A Nancy Small Memorial Fund Update

Tom Small

In response to some questions at the February Wild Ones meeting, I offered a quick overview of the activities of the Nancy Small Memorial Fund over the course of the past year.

Here's a more complete summary of our activities in 2018 and so far this year.



We provided funds for native-plant gardens at the following schools and organizations: Northglade Montessori School, Kalamazoo; Mattawan Later Elementary School (two separate projects, one an upland garden and one a wetland rain garden); STEM Academy, Comstock; Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery; Bronson Lakeview Hospital in Paw Paw; Jericho Town (Edison neighborhood, Kalamazoo); First United Methodist Church, Kalamazoo; Kazoo School, Kalamazoo; Kellogg Forest, Augusta; Kalamazoo College Arboretum; Fair Food Matters at Woodward Elementary School, Kalamazoo; and Indian Lake Elementary School, Vicksburg.

We rejected one application from a school in Holland and suggested a resubmission but haven't received one yet.

In addition, the Fund paid for a fourth printing of Nancy and Tom Small's book *Using Native Plants to Restore Community* and donated 170 copies of the book to Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones to be used for education, promotion, and fund-raising.

During the five years of its existence the Fund has helped to finance native-plant projects at other schools, churches, businesses, neighborhoods, the Sherman Lake YMCA, Peace House, and the Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. Two grants also helped to finance and publicize the film *Hometown Habitat*, with Doug Tallamy.

The Fund, which is financed through sales of the book, will probably expend the last of its money sometime this year and will discontinue operation. For further information, please contact Tom Small at yard2prairie@gmail.com; (269) 381-4946

Colonization and Usage of Eight Milkweed Species by Monarchs, Butterflies, and Bees in Urban Garden Settings: An Abstract

Submitted by Ilse Gebhart



Note from Ilse:

Here is an interesting research paper that shows the importance of gardens that contain milkweed in urban settings. If you would like to read the entire paper, please email me at gebhard.ilse@gmail.com. All photos are of native Michigan milkweed species.

Left: Asclepias syriaca (Common Milkweed)

Abstract

Planting milkweeds on public and private lands has emerged as a central conservation strategy for restoring declining North American migratory populations of the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). Nearly all actionable science on this issue has focused on restoring common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca* L.) in rural land types. The aim of this study was to develop recommendations for the best milkweeds for managed gardens intended to support both monarch butterflies and bees. Eight milkweed (*Asclepias*) species varying in height, form, and leaf shape were grown in a common-garden experiment at a public arboretum. We measured milkweed growth, tillering, and bloom periods, conducted bi-weekly counts of eggs and larvae to assess colonization by wild monarchs, and evaluated suitability for growth of monarch larvae. We also quantified bee visitation and compared the bee assemblages associated with six of the eight species, augmented with additional collections from other sites. Monarchs rapidly colonized the gardens, but did not equally use all of the milkweed species. More eggs and larvae were found on taller, broad-leaved milkweeds, but there was relatively little difference in larval performance, suggesting ovipositional preference for more apparent plants. *Asclepias tuberosa* and *A. fascicularis* attracted the greatest number of bees, whereas bee genus diversity was greatest on *A. verticillata*, *A. fascicularis*, and *A. tuberosa*. Milkweeds that do not spread extensively by tillering may be best suited for managed gardens. Combining milkweeds that are preferred by ovipositing monarchs with ones that are particularly attractive to bees may enhance conservation value of small urban gardens.





Milkweeds (*Asclepias*) native to Michigan, clockwise from upper left: Butterfly Weed (*A.tuberosa*), Swamp Milkweed (*A.incarnata*), Whorled Milkweed (*A.verticillata*), and Common Milkweed (*A.syriaca*).

Volunteers Needed for Plant Exchange

Ruth Caputo

The KAWO plant exchanges are an effective way to introduce new members to native plants - and different native plants to experienced members. We are moving this fall's exchange to a new venue, and need a few people to look at the various options and make decisions and recommendations related to our plant exchanges.



In addition to a new location, we need to consider logistics (set-up including organization of plants, what to do with left-over plants, ensuring appropriate information about plants is available, etc), what kind of information we provide and gather (how many participate...), and whether to have refreshments.

If you like planning events and are interested, please contact me at rdecann47@gmail.com or call 269-323-1538. Thanks for your consideration.

Community Events of Interest to Wild Ones

Thursday, March 21 - 7 p.m., City-wide open meeting on the draft of the proposed Kalamazoo **Natural Features Protection** ordinance and development standards. **Kalamazoo Public Library, Van Deusen Room**. The City planning staff and the Natural Features Protection technical committee, which includes our friends Tom Small and Tyler Bassett, welcome citizen comment. For the latest draft of the ordinance, see www.imaginekalamazoo.com/projects/nfp. A final draft will have a public hearing before the City Planning Commission on Tuesday, April 9, at 7 p.m., in the City Commission chambers. It will go before the City Commission for a first reading on Monday, May 6, 7 p.m. and for final approval Monday, May 20, 7 p.m. Citizen comment is welcome at all these meetings.

April 5-6, Third Annual Foodways Symposium. Kalamazoo Valley Museum, and Kalamazoo Valley Community College Healthy Living campus. The Symposium “serves as a convening point for students, practitioners, and the community to come together to build a strong, vibrant local food system.” This year’s theme is “The Foods We Carried: Middle Eastern Foodways in Michigan.” All events are free. Further information: www.kvcc.edu/kalamazoofoodways.

April 6-May 1, Westminster Art Festival: a Celebration of Art, Earth Care & Faith. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1515 Helen Ave., Kalamazoo. This year’s theme is “Migration: Traveling Mercies,” including both the forced migrations of displaced and suffering peoples and the migrations of creatures threatened by loss of habitat and climate change. There will be cash prizes for poems and works of art on the theme submitted by March 27. More information: www.westminsterartfestival.org; 269-344-3966.

Saturday, April 13 - 10:30 a.m., “**Building a Monarch Waystation in Your Backyard**,” a program by Chad Hughson, owner of Hidden Savanna Native-Plant Nursery. Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1515 Helen Ave., Kalamazoo. This program is part of the Westminster Art Festival and its “migration” theme. www.westminsterartfestival.org

May 11 - 9am-3pm [Backyard Bird Habitat: Landscape Design for Birds](#) by MI Audobon Society, Okemos, Michigan.

June 8 - 9am-12pm [Wild Edibles Workshop](#) at Kellogg Bird Sanctuary

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!

SEEDLINGS is edited by Tom Small and Kim Patrie. It appears mostly monthly. The next regular issue will come early in April. **Deadline for April issue is March 15**. Please send

submissions to Tom at yard2prairy@gmail.com or Kim at 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
and www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes



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