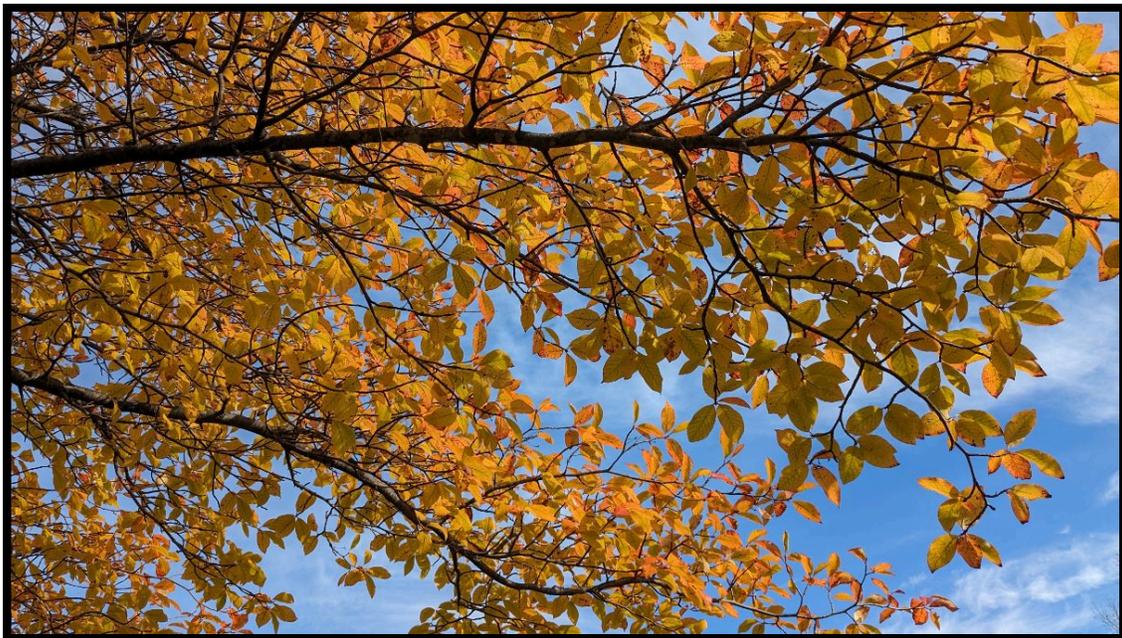


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Black Tupelo (Nyssa sylvatica) B. Bradburn

November 2024

SEEDLINGS

Wild Ones|Kalamazoo Area Chapter

"There can be no purpose more enspiriting than to begin the age of restoration, reweaving the wondrous diversity of life that still surrounds us." —E.O. Wilson



Jack-in-the-Pulpit (Arisaema triphyllum) P. Reid

Dear *|FNAME|*,

Believe it or not, the photo above was taken just a few weeks ago on the Kal-Haven Trail. This Jack-in-the-Pulpit seems to be responding to the warm fall weather. Pat Reid, a board member of the Friends of the Kal-Haven, tells me that this is the second year in a row she's found *Arisaema triphyllum* blooming in October. Many of you joined us for a field trip to the Kal-Haven last spring. You can learn more about the Ecosystem Restoration Project [on our website](#).

It's time to elect chapter officers for 2025. Details about the election are included below; KAWO members have already received this information by email.

And finally, Seedlings will take a break in December, but we'll be back in January with more native plant news for you.

Beth Bradburn

Editor

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November Program: Native Gardening Q&A

Wednesday, November 20, 6:30-8:00pm at Portage District Library
with Mike Weis, Chad Hughson, and Steve Keto

This panel discussion is your opportunity to ask the local experts questions about gardening with native plants and all things local ecology. Steve Keto, Chad Hughson, and Mike Weis have a combined 80-plus years experience with native plant gardening, horticulture, and restoration. There will not be a formal presentation; instead we are opening up the floor to an hour of Q&A. [Learn more.](#)



Note that our program is on the third Wednesday (November 20) this month because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

Most of our past presentations are available on YouTube to view 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.

Past issues of Seedlings can be found [here](#), and by clicking the link between the Facebook and YouTube links above.

Fall Plant Exchange A Success

Noel Ocen

On September 29, KAWO's 25th Anniversary Fall Plant Exchange at the home of past president Jessie Davis was a huge success. Jessie's gardens were lovely and a wonderful backdrop for the event. Between 75 and 80 native-plant lovers came to take home about 350 plants donated by KAWO members and supporters.

Margo Rebar, Ann Klobucar, and Noel Ocen were on hand to answer plant questions, and Gail Simmons and Barb Sagara welcomed each guest with information about KAWO's mission and activities.

Special mention goes to Kathy McGoff who supplied tents, tables, and chairs, but also treated all guests to fruit and veggie snacks, drinks, and delicious cakes to mark the occasion.

Thanks go to everyone who made this 25th Anniversary Exchange such fun, especially the enthusiastic guests who took home native plants to enhance their gardens. We hope to hear from you all next summer with exciting reports about the success these plants had in your yards.



Quyen Edwards Wins National Wild Ones Photo Prize



Congratulations to KAWO vice president Quyen Edwards, who won first prize in the "Events" category for the 2024 National Wild Ones Photo Contest. Quyen's photo, of her niece on a butterfly walk at the Kalamazoo Nature Center, is called "All Ages Welcome." Quyen commented, "she may not be able to walk yet, but she can point out the butterflies floating by!" Click [here](#) to admire Quyen's photo more (and see other category winners).

Slug Caterpillars—Fantasy or Reality?

Ilse Gebhard

In his book *Caterpillars of Eastern North America*, David L. Wagner calls the caterpillars of the *Limacodidae* moths "more fantasy than reality." Their common name is slug caterpillars because instead of regular legs, slug caterpillars have suckers, which help them move in a slow, slug-like fashion. Their head is deeply retracted into the thorax and hidden even while feeding. Some species have stinging hairs, similar to stinging nettle in intensity and duration, so best not to touch. The caterpillars feed on many species of trees and shrubs and pass the winter as prepupa in a cocoon of brown silk.

Over the years I have come across three of the fifty slug caterpillar species found in North America. All three were found in the fall on oak leaves. The trees in the genus *Quercus* are "keystone" species, species that have a wide native range within an ecoregion and support a large variety of native biodiversity. In his book *The Nature of Oaks*, Douglas W. Tallamy states that in his county in Pennsylvania, 511 species of moths and butterflies develop on oaks – nearly 100 more species than their closest competitor, the native cherries. His list of slug caterpillars found on oaks included the three species I have come across.

I found the first slug caterpillar myself, the aptly named Saddleback Caterpillar (*Acharia stimulea*) at what is now the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's (SWMLC) Sand Creek Preserve in Alamo Township. At just over an inch long, it is the biggest of the slug caterpillars and has stinging spines. For a couple of days, it nibbled on oak leaves but on the third day a parasitic larva emerged.



Saddleback Caterpillar. K. Csia

Russ found the second slug caterpillar, a Crowned Slug (*Isa textula*), on a field trip to SWMLC's Carter Lake Preserve in Barry County. At 0.6 inches, it was as big as it is expected to become and was armed with both stinging hairs and spines. It did not feed on the oak leaves I provided but instead roamed around the jar for a while, settled down on a brown leaf, rolled up into a ball, and spun a cocoon almost the same color as the leaf.



Crowned Slug Caterpillar B. Barber

If I had not watched the whole process, I would have guessed it to be a leaf gall. Thusly well camouflaged, I placed the leaf under some oak leaves in the yard and wished it a good winter sleep.

Like the second slug caterpillar, Russ found the third one, this one at the Gourdneck State Game Area in Portage.

I remembered seeing a slug caterpillar of similarly odd shape in Wagner's book but it was all green. Reading the text for the Skiff Moth (*Prolimacodes badia*) convinced me that I had the correct ID. It says the coloration is highly variable but the shape unmistakable. It's length of 0.6 inches fit, as did the absence of stinging spines. I wonder if the color variability has to do with camouflage.



Skiff Moth Caterpillar, day it was found R. Schipper

The all-green caterpillar in Wagner's book was sitting on a green leaf. After the container with my caterpillar sat on a brown towel for a day, it turned all tan, like leaves would in fall. It never fed, actually never even moved, and on the third day, like with the Saddleback Caterpillar, a parasitic larva emerged.



Skiff Moth Caterpillar, day after it was found I. Gebhard

Intellectually I understand the important role parasites play in keeping nature in balance but I am

always chagrined when one of my “wards” already contains the cause of its demise.

Read Ilse Gebhard's blog post about Cabbage White caterpillars [here](#).

Who Am I?

A native flora ID quiz from Ilse Gebhard



Photo R. Schipper

Click [here](#) for the answer!

Election of KAWO Officers for 2025

It's time to elect chapter officers for 2025. On October 25, KAWO members received an email that included all of the information below. If you are not a member and would like to participate in the elections by voting, nominating a candidate, or running for a position yourself, please consider joining Wild Ones. You can do so online at <https://members.wildones.org/join/>. If you have any questions about membership or elections, email us at info@kalamazoowildones.org.

Elected positions

President. The president helps prepare meeting agendas, presides over executive and membership meetings, represents the chapter to other organizations and to the public (or delegates representation), communicates with the national office, and oversees the annual national report.

Vice President. The vice president acts in place of the president as necessary and should be willing to succeed as president.

Treasurer. The treasurer maintains financial records, including the chapter's savings and checking accounts, prepares a monthly financial report, maintains the post office box, and prepares and submits an annual financial report to the national office.

Secretary. The secretary helps prepare and circulate meeting agendas and financial reports, sets up Zoom meetings, transcribes and circulates minutes, collects annual conflict-of-interest statements, and reports election results to the national office.

Member-at-Large. The four members-at-large participate in executive committee meetings, standing committees, and chapter activities.

Important dates

November 10. Nominations close at 5:00pm. Members should send nominations to Kathy McGoff at afscme1677@sbcglobal.net. Clicking on the email address will create an email form.

November 11. Members will receive, via email, a link to cast their ballots.

November 18. Voting closes at 5:00pm.

November 20. Election results will be announced at our monthly program.

We will also announce the results in the January Seedlings. Elected officers will begin their terms in January 2025.

Community Events of Interest

Sunday, November 3 - 1:00pm-4:00pm: Fall Migration Celebration, Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. [Learn more](#).

Wednesday, November 6 - 10:00am and 2:15pm: Robin Wall Kimmerer, Kalamazoo Valley Community College Visiting Writer Series, KVCC Texas Township Campus. The morning and afternoon lectures will be different. They are free and open to the public, but require advance registration. [Learn more](#).

Thursday, November 7 - 5:30pm-7:00pm: "Reciprocity through Flames: Restoring Relationships and Beneficial Fire to Great Lakes Forests," a presentation by visiting scholar Dr. Evan Larson, Fetzer Center, WMU. [Learn more](#).

Sunday, November 10 - 10:00am-12:00pm: Volunteer Day, Kleinstuck Preserve. Meet at the Maple Street YMCA tennis courts.

Friday, November 15 - 11:00am-1:00pm: Conservation in a Changing World Series: "Noise in the

Anthropocene: Soundscapes, Songs, and Silent Pauses," Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. Co-sponsored by KAWO. This event is in-person or virtual and includes optional lunch with reservation. [Learn more and register.](#)

Monday, November 18 - 7:00pm-8:00pm: Michigan Botanical Society Program: "Mycorrhizal Fungi: Nature's Great Connector," with Dr. Ellen Holste, People's Church, Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

Wednesday, November 20 - 6:30pm-8:00pm: "Native Gardening Q&A," with Mike Weis, Chad Hughson, and Steve Keto, a monthly presentation by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones at Portage District Library. **Note that our program is on the third Wednesday (November 20) this month because of the Thanksgiving holiday.** [Learn more.](#)

Thursday, November 21 - 7:00pm: Pints and Native Plants, an informal meet-up at [Brewery Outré](#) in Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

Friday, November 29 - 9:00am-6:00pm: Kalamazoo Nature Center trails open to the public with free admission. [Learn more.](#)

Sunday, December 1 - 1:00pm-3:00pm: Natural Gift-Wrapping Workshop, PFC Natural Grocery, Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

Thursday, December 5 - 7:00pm: Pints and Native Plants, an informal meet-up at [Brewery Outré](#) in Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

Sunday, December 8 - 10:00am-12:00pm: Volunteer Day, Kleinstuck Preserve. Meet at the Maple Street YMCA tennis courts.

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 Beth Bradburn. It appears mostly monthly.
The next regular issue will arrive in January. **Deadline for the January issue is December 20.**

[Contact the editor](#)

Contributing Editor:

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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