



*Sassafras tree in autumn foliage (Sassafras albidum)*

October 2018

# SEEDLINGS

## WILD ONES

**Kalamazoo Area Chapter News**  
*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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## October Program: City Planning and the Environment

*By Tom Small*

**Rebekah Kik**, Director of Kalamazoo Dept. of Community Development and Planning, and **Christina Anderson**, Kalamazoo City Planner, will speak with Wild Ones on “City Planning and the Environment” at the October 24th Wild Ones meeting.



Kalamazoo has been very busy for a couple of years putting together a new master plan, a future vision of Kalamazoo for 2025, and a Climate Action Plan. All of them have many implications and goals pertaining to the natural environment, some of them

specifically having to do with the planting of native species, in public right-of-way, in parks and other public spaces, and in private development.

Other goals and proposed actions involve increasing tree canopy, daylighting and relandscaping creeks, and restoring urban wetlands and forested areas. An expanded inventory of natural features would identify priority areas for unifying and connecting neighborhood green spaces across the city.

Neighborhoods throughout the city are currently creating their own goals and action plans to be incorporated into the City's master plan and strategic vision. Many of these plans also hold implications for native species enhancement.

Some Wild Ones have already been involved in the development of environmental goals and plans and in the landscaping portion of the City's Climate Action Plan. For more information about how to become involved and how city environmental planning can enhance Wild Ones outreach to the broader community, bring your concerns, questions, and observations to the meeting with Rebekah Kik and Christina Anderson. Their presentation will focus on the work of the last year and the expected work going forward to realize environmental responsibility in Kalamazoo.

To view the city's 2025 Strategic Vision and Master Plan, [Click Here](#)

*Meeting Oct. 24th, First United Methodist Church, downtown Kalamazoo. Social hour and refreshments at 6:30pm, program at 7pm. All welcome!*

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**My Magic Swamps**  
***by Ilse Gebhard***



Over the last five or so years we lost most of our milkweed to a plant disease called Milkweed Yellows. It killed all of our swamp and butterfly weed and most of the common. The disease is caused by bacteria called phytoplasmas and are spread from plant to plant by a leafhopper.

Because the remaining milkweed grows on a slope, I cannot easily access it for finding monarch eggs or larvae. So this spring I planted four 2<sup>nd</sup>-year swamp milkweed plants that had been overwintered as plugs into 8" diameter clay pots and set them on our deck right next to the native plant flowerbed. Each plant put up 2 stems, the tallest of which was just over 2 feet by the end of summer.



Would a female monarch find my swamps and leave me some eggs? Starting in late May, when the plants only had a few small leaves, I checked the plants daily and finally July 4<sup>th</sup> I found 3 eggs. I snipped off the leaves with eggs and brought them inside to raise. Would more eggs be laid? Yes, on July 5, 6, 7 and 9, by which time I had accumulated 15 eggs inside.

After a break in egg laying, it resumed on July 15<sup>th</sup>. Maybe a different female? It now became a challenge. How many eggs would be laid on my "Magic Swamps" if I kept bringing them in? Egg laying continued until August 23, for a total of 135 eggs and one 1<sup>st</sup> instar from an egg that I had missed.



The females were very secretive as only once did I see one flitting around the plants, although I glanced over at them many times. One added bonus to my frequent glances was to see our resident blue racer curled between the pots one day.

***Photos left, top to bottom:***

*Milkweeds on the deck*

*Eggs, closeup*

*One day's haul of eggs*

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## **You Can Help the Monarchs: Milkweed Seeds Needed** *by Ilse Gebhart*

As in the past few years, the Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones Monarch Committee will again need milkweed seeds for growing plants and for making up seed packets to give away at various events. Last year 800 packets were given away just at the Do-dah Parade.

We would like to encourage members to collect, and separate from fluff, seeds of common, swamp and butterfly weed milkweeds and bring them to a meeting this fall. Poke and whorled milkweed seeds are also needed. If many people bring seeds from just a few pods, it saves the committee a lot of work.

You can bring the seeds in a baggie, a paper bag or an envelope. Label seeds with species, and collection date and location. For example:

Swamp milkweed, 2018, Kalamazoo County.

Thank you.



*There can be as many as 250 seeds in one milkweed pod. To easily separate fluff from seeds: place pod contents in a small paper bag, close top and shake vigorously. (Be ready to deal with a big pile of elusive fluff when you open the bag!) Label a container for the seeds as described above, and hand off to Ilse at a meeting or [email her](#).*

## **You Can Help The Monarchs: Create a Waystation** **Register your Native Planting as a Monarch Watch Waystation**

by Ilse Gebhard

Now that gardening winds down for the year, consider registering your native planting as a Monarch Watch Waystation. All you need are some milkweeds for the monarch caterpillars to eat and some nectar plants for the adult butterflies. Any milkweeds native to our area are acceptable.

No, the monarchs don't look at the registry and say "aha, here is a waystation I can visit", but if you put up a sign, the neighbors or passers-by might get curious and maybe even become inspired to plant their own.



I suspect this year many of you got to say "if you plant it they will come". It was a very good monarch year.

As of September 2018 there were 21,946 waystations registered. Michigan is in 3<sup>rd</sup> place with 1616 (7.4%) behind TX with 1818 and IL with 1687. To my chagrin we were knocked out of 1<sup>st</sup> place, which we held for a number of years.

Kalamazoo County is a hotbed for waystations in our state with 157 (9.7%). Of those 116 have a Kalamazoo address, 13 a Portage address and 28 with addresses throughout the county.

[Register a Waystation](#) or [Explore the Waystation Registry](#)

*Editor's note: For more information about these projects and more regarding monarch butterflies, see the [Monarch page on our web site](#).*

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## Community Events of Interest to Wild Ones

**November 28, 7pm** – Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones November program:  
**Climate Change and Plant Communities** David Karowe, Professor of Biological Sciences, WMU First United Methodist Church, downtown Kalamazoo. Doors at 6:30pm, program at 7pm

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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 will come early in October. **Deadline for submission is September 15.** Please send submissions to Tom at [yard2prairy@gmail.com](mailto:yard2prairy@gmail.com) or Kim at [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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