

*Trouble reading this email? [View it in your browser](#)*

\*|LIST:ADDRESS\_VCARD|\*



*Orange Coneflower (Rudbeckia fulgida) B. Bradburn*

October 2025

# 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



*Bombus sp. on Stiff Goldenrod (O. rigidum) B. Bradburn*

Dear \*|FNAME|\*,

My neighbor just put up his outdoor Christmas lights (?!), but even though I can see them from the kitchen window they are no substitute for the soon-to-be-over display of goldenrod and sneezeweed (neither of which is an allergen!) that Paul and I have both been staring at over the lunch table for the past many weeks. Somehow we ended up with a huge yellow mosaic mural next to the house. Even seen through a glass slider and the screened porch windows, its glow is compelling--not penetrating like sunlight but magnetic like the

## In This Issue

From the Editor

October Program

Artwork Offered in  
Silent Auction

Protecting Asylum  
Lake Preserve

Contribute to Soil  
Health Study

Fall Plant Exchange  
Report

Property with Native  
Gardens for Sale

Honorable Harvest  
Lecture Series

Cicadas...

...and the Wasps  
That Eat Them

Native Flora ID Quiz

Community Events

moon. I'll miss this spectacle. I know the flowers will be back next summer, but something will probably be a bit different. The seasons are cyclical, but the years are not identical.

Autumn greetings,

**Beth Bradburn**  
*Editor*

## Contact Wild Ones

---



---

## **October Program: Anishinaabeg Cultural Fire Stewardship**

**Wednesday, October 22, 6:30-8:00pm at Portage District Library**  
*with Mary Parr*, Fire Ecologist and Conservation Associate for MNFI

This presentation will explore cultural fire stewardship practiced by the Anishinaabeg in Michigan: the cultural intentions behind Anishinaabeg fire practices across generations; the ecological role of fire in fire-dependent natural communities and the ways it supports plant and animal relatives; and the ongoing efforts of MNFI and its collaborations with Tribal governments, universities, and state and federal agencies to document Indigenous fire histories and incorporate this knowledge into prescribed fire planning and support opportunities for co-stewardship. [Learn more.](#)



---

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.

---

## **KAWO Holds Silent Auction for Artwork**

**Quyên Edwards, KAWO Vice-President**



Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones was thrilled to be the beneficiary of a 2024 Kalamazoo Artistic Development Initiative Grant. The Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo accepted a proposal by local artist and illustrator Olivia Mendoza to create a custom insect/host plant illustration in celebration of our chapter's 25th anniversary. Olivia collaborated with KAWO Vice President Quyen Edwards to select the subject of the illustration - a Snowberry Clearwing Moth (*Hemaris diffinis*) with Nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*).

We are excited to share that the original artwork created for our **2025 Wild Ones Garden Sign** is being offered in a **silent auction** this fall! This is a special opportunity to own a one-of-a-kind piece of art that celebrates our shared mission of protecting and restoring native plants and habitats. Proceeds from the auction will support chapter programming and outreach efforts in the year ahead. Olivia's custom colored pencil artwork is 18x20 inches and comes matted in black in a 25x37 inch black frame.

**Silent Auction Details:**

- Bidding opened at \$300 at the September KAWO Program at the Portage District Library on September 24th.
- Bidding closes at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, November 19th at the beginning of our final KAWO Program of the year.
- There is a paper bid sheet that will be at in-person meetings in October and November at the Portage District Library. You are also welcome to bid via email to [info@kalamazoowildones.org](mailto:info@kalamazoowildones.org).

We hope you'll join us in supporting Wild Ones Kalamazoo Area by placing a bid on this beautiful work of art. Your participation helps us continue to grow our impact and share the value of native plants with our community.

---

**[Help Protect Asylum Lake Preserve](#)**

The Asylum Lake Preservation Association Board reports that a car wash is again being proposed at Stadium Drive and Drake Road, with a re-zoning request to be heard by the City of Kalamazoo Planning Commission on November 6.



ALPA will lead a volunteer resistance coordination, awareness, and information meeting on October 23 at 5:30pm at the Kalamazoo Public Library. To learn more about how to help, see [this flyer](#) or visit the [ALPA website](#).

---

## **Native Plant and Soil Health Study**



The Docherty Lab at WMU is exploring the potential benefits of replacing traditional lawns with native Michigan grassland species. Specific goals are to understand how native grassland plant installations can be leveraged to 1) influence soil health, 2) improve native biodiversity, and 3) create conservation corridors within the City of Kalamazoo.

If you live in Kalamazoo and have at least one native grassland (i.e. grasses, wildflowers, forbs, shrubs and sedges) installation on your property AND a more traditional lawn area, please consider participating in the study. To learn more about the project (including other participation requirements) and sign up, visit the [project website](#) or download [this flyer](#).

---

## **Fall Plant Exchange Report**

from Noel Ocen, KAWO President

Our first plant exchange in a public setting was a success, with over 160 guests and an estimated 1500 plants sent to their new homes in area native gardens. We are grateful to Natalie Patchell and the other members of the Crane Park Beautification Project for co-hosting and helping us organize this event. We also appreciate the many KAWO members who volunteered, donated plants, and helped answer gardeners' questions.



---

## Area Property with Conservation Easement for Sale



KAWO has learned of an area property for sale with native wildflower gardens on site. The owners would love to sell to someone who wants to keep and care for the gardens. This property also has a conservation easement held by Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

[View listing on Zillow](#)

[View description on SWMLC website](#)

---

## Honorable Harvest Lecture Series

The Honorable Harvest Lecture Series, organized by ValleyHUB, will include two speakers from KAWO in its fall program. On October 14, KAWO vice president Quyen Edwards will speak on "Growing with Purpose--My Native Plant Journey," and on November 11, KAWO founder Tom Small will speak on "Restoring the Wisdom of Ancestors and the More-Than-Human Community."



The lectures begin at 6:30pm and take place at 418 E. Walnut St., Kalamazoo. For more information and to view the whole lecture series, which includes several other talks of interest to Wild Ones, visit the [ValleyHUB website](#).

---

## Lyric Cicadas - An Annual Species

Ilse Gebhard

We always seem to hear about the 13- and 17-year periodical cicadas when nearly all individuals in a local population are developmentally synchronized and emerge in the same year. But there are annual cicadas where some of them emerge every year, even though individual nymphs feed underground from two to five years. One such species is the lyric cicada (*Neotibicen lyricen*).



In late July, two Friendship Village residents and I spotted a very large “bug” on one of Friendship Village’s walking paths. Molly took a photo with her smartphone and the iNaturalist App identified it as a cicada. We were rather puzzled by the identification as the bug did not have wings.

It was not until the next day that I realized that iNaturalist was correct – it was a cicada, at the nymph stage, that had just emerged from the ground and was going to shed its exoskeleton to reveal the adult winged cicada.

*Above: Cicada nymph M. Williams Below: Cicada exoskeleton Wikipedia*



Over the years I had come across such “shells” on tree trunks a number of times, and I had found adult cicadas, but never a nymph. I suspect the above ground nymph stage is very short.

Three days later I found a dead cicada on a path in the Village Woods. I brought it home and took some photos.

I posted the photo of this year’s cicada suggesting its identity as lyric cicada and it was confirmed, making it Research Grade. You need at least one confirmation of a suggestion to be Research Grade. Scientists using the sightings collected by iNaturalist need some assurance that the sightings are correctly identified.



In the meantime, Molly uploaded the nymph photos to iNaturalist suggesting “cicada.” I then went to her post and suggested “lyric cicada.” We may never get a species confirmation of that suggestion but we do have a confirmed sighting of an adult of that species very close by.

*Lyric cicada adult I. Gebhard*

All this ado about cicada identification made me think that what I was hearing in the Village Woods may be cicadas. That gave me the incentive to figure out how to make a recording on my smartphone using the iNaturalist App. As far as I can tell, my recording sounds just like a confirmed recording of a lyric cicada, and I boldly suggested mine is also of that species. Awaiting confirmation. Regardless,

it is that of some cicada species because they “sing” during the days whereas most of the other “singing” insects do so mostly at night.

Listen and compare [my recording](#) with the [confirmed recording](#).

The “singing” noises of male cicadas are actually species-specific mating calls that can be heard by females for quite a distance. The sound comes from a membrane on the male’s midsection that is made to vibrate. The area beneath it acts like an echo chamber.

Cicadas sing from the tree tops and are the loudest on sunny, hot days. They usually gather in groups, thought to be a defense mechanism – safety in numbers. Surrounded by sound, potential predators find it difficult to home in on any individual. Sudden unison stopping of singing is also considered a defense mechanism. You don’t want to be the last one singing and thus give away your location.

As the “singing” males in the tree tops attract females, they mate and the female cuts slits into the bark of a twig, into which she lays her eggs. After about six weeks the eggs hatch and the tiny nymphs drop to the ground and burrow into the ground 6-24 inches deep. In the ground they locate tree roots, and with their specialized mouth parts, feed on the sap stored in the roots until they have reached their final nymphal stage and are ready to emerge two to five years later. This does not harm the trees, nor are the trees harmed by the adults sucking sap from twigs.

Read more by Ilse Gebhard [on our blog](#).

---

## **Cicada Killer Wasps**

**Molly Williams**

This intimidating-looking wasp (about 1½ inches long) was found (deceased) in early August on a walkway on the Friendship Village campus.

While it may look threatening, this species of solitary wasp is actually not aggressive toward humans. Adult wasps feed on plant nectar. During its adult life stage, its focus is on providing for the next generation by capturing and paralyzing adult cicadas and leaving them as food for their larval babies.



*Cicada killer wasp (Sphecius speciosus) R. Schipper*

In late summer, adult cicadas emerge. We heard their buzzing in the Village Woods in July and August. The adult cicada killer wasps emerge at the same time. The female wasp digs a burrow into the soil where she will lay her eggs. The central burrow may be about 10 inches deep with several chambers branching from the main shaft.

Because sandy soil is preferred, burrows may be found in sandy athletic surfaces such as outdoor volleyball courts or sometimes in lawns. This can be upsetting for homeowners who don't want their lawns disrupted by the sandy mounds dug by the female wasp.

This is a cicada killer mound with two burrow entrances, found in a Garden Home lawn on the Friendship Village campus. After the burrow is prepared, the female wasp finds a cicada, stings it to paralyze it, and then brings it to her burrow. She places it in one of the underground chambers and lays an egg on the paralyzed cicada. In a few days, the egg hatches to a larva that consumes the cicada, pupates over the winter, and finally emerges as an adult wasp the following summer.



*Above: Cicada killer mound with two burrow entrances, found in a Garden Home lawn on the Friendship Village campus M. Williams*

*Below: Cicada killer wasp carrying an adult cicada B. Buchanan, USFWS*

The challenge faced by the mother wasp is dragging the significantly heavier cicada back to her burrow. She might drag it along the ground, or – if she's some distance away – she climbs a tree, hauling the cicada with her, and then flies with it back to her burrow. However, the load is too great for her to sustain level flight. She will lose altitude throughout her flight. So, she needs to figure out how high to climb the tree in order for her descending flight path to end at her burrow. With very loud, frantic buzzing, the heavily laden mama wasp launches from the tree and lands within a few inches of her target. I've seen this happen! Her understanding of aerodynamics is accurate enough that she lands within an inch or two of her goal.



Then she and her heavy load disappear underground where she ensures that the egg she lays is adequately provisioned by the stunned cicada.

These wasps are amazing to watch as they prepare for their next generation. Although cicada killer

wasps pose little danger to humans, there are other similar looking wasps and hornets that can be aggressive. It's best to stand quietly and not disturb them while observing these fascinating creatures.

---

## Who Am I?

A native flora ID quiz from Ilse Gebhard



*Photo R. Schipper*

Click [here](#) for the answer!

---

## Community Events of Interest

**Thursday, October 9 - 6:00pm-8:00pm:** Work Day at Jerico. [Learn more.](#)

**Saturday, October 11 - 9:00am-11:00am:** Spot & Stop Invasive Species Removal, Woods Lake Park, Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

**Saturday, October 11 - 10:00am-12:00pm:** Michigan Botanical Society Field Trip to Acidic Sandy Flatwoods, Allegan State Game Area. [Learn more.](#)

**Sunday, October 12 - 10:00am-12:00pm:** Volunteer Work Day, Kleinstuck Preserve. [Learn more.](#)

**Tuesday, October 14 - 6:30pm-7:30pm:** "Growing with Purpose: My Native Plant Journey," a presentation by KAWO Vice President Quyen Edwards for the Honorable Harvest Lecture Series,

418 E. Walnut St., Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

**Thursday, October 16 - 6:30pm-8:00pm:** Shinrin-yoku (forest bathing), Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Thursday, October 16 - 7:00pm:** Pints and Native Plants, an informal meetup at [Brewery Outré](#) in Kalamazoo. [Learn more.](#)

**Saturday, October 18 - 10:00am-12:00pm:** Fall Forest Color Walk, Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Saturday, October 18 - 1:00pm-2:00pm:** Fall Comes to the Forest-Guided Nature Walk, Oshtemo Township Park. [Learn more.](#)

**Monday, October 20 - 6:30pm-8:00pm:** Wild Ones River City Event: People, Plants, and Partnerships: Centering Relationships in Green Infrastructure Projects in the Plaster Creek Watershed, Grand Rapids Public Library. [Learn more.](#)

**Tuesday, October 21, and Wednesday, October 22 - 4:00pm-6:00pm:** Tree Planting at the Sugarbush, a volunteer opportunity at Kalamazoo Nature Center. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Wednesday, October 22 - 6:30pm-8:00pm:** "Cultural Fire Stewardship of the Anishinaabeg," with Mary Parr, a monthly presentation by Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones at Portage District Library. [Learn more.](#)

**Thursday, October 23 - 5:30pm-7:30pm:** ALPA Car Wash Public Information and Resistance Meeting, Kalamazoo Public Library. See description above or visit the [ALPA website.](#)

*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 November. **Deadline for the November issue is October 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](http://www.KalamazooWildOnes.org)  
and [www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes](https://www.Facebook.com/KalamazooAreaWildOnes)



*Copyright © \*|CURRENT\_YEAR|\* \*|LIST:COMPANY|\*, All rights reserved.  
\*|IFNOT:ARCHIVE\_PAGE|\* \*|LIST:DESCRIPTION|\**

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

*\*|IF:REWARDS|\* \*|HTML:REWARDS|\* \*|END:IF|\**