



Kalamazoo Area Wild Ones Newsletter

Seedlings

March 2026



"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

Dear friend,

Our monthly newsletter has a new format, but the same native-plant-related content, including our community events listing, information about actions you can take, and of course the native flora ID quiz. We hope you continue to enjoy Seedlings!

Beth Bradburn, Editor

KAWO Events in March

Pints and Native Plants

Thursday, March 19th, 2026 at 7:00 pm

Brewery Outré, 567 E Ransom St, Kalamazoo, MI, 49007 [Map](#)

Pints & Native Plants is an informal meet-up that takes place on the third Thursday of each month. It's a chance to have a drink together and chat about native plants, challenges in our gardens, pollinators, and more. Everyone is welcome—come by and get to know other native plant enthusiasts and KAWO members.

March Program: Welcome, Little Sister

Wednesday, March 25th, 2026 at 6:30 pm

Portage District Library, 300 Library Ln, Portage, MI, 49002 [Map](#)

Heather Ratliff presents: "Welcome, Little Sister: How Our Community Protected Twelve Acres of Woods Adjacent to Kleinstuck Preserve."

Heather is a founding member of the Stewards of Kleinstuck, which was established in 2007 to care for Kleinstuck Preserve. She has been involved in local environmental efforts for over three decades, including the community campaign to purchase and protect Little Sister Preserve (pictured above).

Professionally, Heather is a registered nurse and board-certified functional medicine practitioner in Kalamazoo, where she owns The Wellness RN Health Coaching. She is committed to strengthening the resilience and vitality of both people and natural spaces.

Doors open at 6:00 for social time.

Most of our past monthly programs are available on our [YouTube channel](#).

Potential Use of Insects for Control of Spotted Knapweed in Michigan

MDARD officials are seeking public comment on whether to permit the release of weevils to control invasive spotted knapweed. Under consideration are seedhead weevils and root-boring weevils that fed solely on spotted knapweed and therefore don't pose a risk to other plants. If you are not already familiar with spotted knapweed please consult [Michigan's invasive species alert document](#) for information about this plant.

[This link](#) will take you directly to the survey. Submit your comments by 11:59pm on March 6.

[Kalamazoo Gazette article](#) (paywalled)

[WILX article](#)

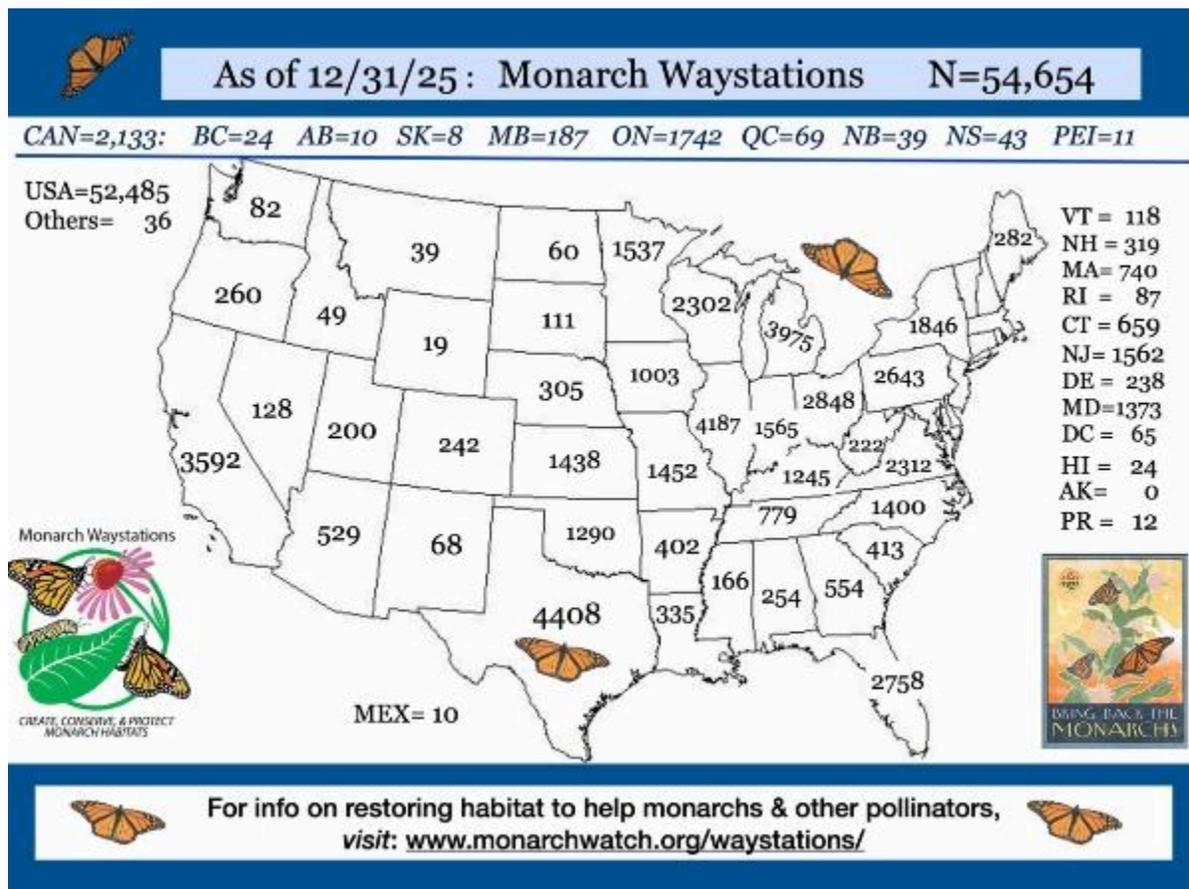
Monarch Watch Waystations Update

by Ilse Gebhard

The monarch waystation program is now in its twenty-second year, and as of the end of last year 54,654 sites were registered. Michigan has been in third place, after Texas and Illinois, for a number of those years. There are 285 waystations in Kalamazoo County, or 7.2% of the total 3975 in the state. It is hard to make comparisons with other counties, but one way is to use population data. Based on the latest population figures I found, Kalamazoo County has 2.6% of the state's total population. Using this criteria, with 7.2 % of the number of total waystations in Michigan, Kalamazoo County looks quite good.

But please don't rest on our laurels. Having a very active Wild Ones chapter in the area, with members whom I have been able to cajole into registering their native plantings, has made those numbers possible. Let's keep Michigan and Kalamazoo County near the top in the number of waystations in the country and in the state, respectively.

For information on the waystation program and to register your property, [visit the Monarch Watch Waystation web page.](#)



Site Visits for New Members

We offer site visits to new KAWO members! An experienced native plant gardener will visit your land and help you assess its conditions and figure out what to plant, with continuing mentorship available for up to a year. To arrange a visit, please contact Ann Klobucar (cablekar1@aol.com) and Kira Griggs (kliparijordan@gmail.com).

Residential Porch Lights Attract Moths

by Ilse Gebhard

The porch lights of the duplexes in the retirement community where we live are on all night and they attract moths. Because moths are nocturnal, a conservation consideration for them is protection from light pollution. Artificial lights are believed to be a factor in the decline of nocturnal wildlife such as moths and fireflies and to disrupt the migration of birds that navigate by starlight.

Since the porch lights can't be turned off, the next best thing to do is identify and document the moths they attract, which are found on the siding of the homes in the morning. A couple of summers ago, in just a matter of a few weeks, six species of moths were photographed and identified.

The *Field Guide to Moths of Northeastern North America* by Beadle and Leckie lists all six species as common. I had come across the clymene moth (*Haploa clymene*) and the porcelain gray (*Protoarmia porcelaria*) at our former home, but the others were new to me. For looks, the clymene moth wins the contest with its striking cream and black patterned forewings. The caterpillars of both the clymene moth and the porcelain gray feed on a wide variety of trees and shrubs.

The single-dotted wave (*Idaea dimidiata*) was introduced from Europe, and its caterpillar feeds on a variety of plants, including common dandelion, also introduced from Europe. The forage looper (*Caenurgina erechtea*) feeds on giant ragweed and various species of clovers, grass, and alfalfa, and is said to have several broods during the summer. The greater grapevine looper (*Eulithis gracilineata*), as indicated by its name, seems to be the fussiest eater of the bunch, feeding only on wild grapes or Virginia creeper.



Clockwise from upper left: porcelain gray (*R. Schipper*), single-dotted wave (*R. Schipper*), greater grapevine looper (*J. Hardie*), forage looper (*R. Schipper*), clymene moth (*L. Stillwell*)

The changeable grass-veneer (*Fissicrambus mutabilis*) is the smallest of the six and certainly the oddest-looking, with its squared-off wings and headstand position at rest. In this photo, taken at the Kalamazoo retirement community, the moth's head is on the left. Compare this image with a [research grade sighting on iNaturalist](#).



Changeable grass-veneer (*L. Stillwell*)

The smartphone app Seek led me to its identification. Seek also confirmed the identification of the other five species, which I had made independently by paging through my moth book. Though not perfect, Seek is a very useful artificial intelligence tool.

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

Who Am I?

A Native Flora ID Quiz from Ilse Gebhard



Visit [Michigan Flora](#) for the answer!

Photo: I. Gebhard

Other Community Events of Interest

Tuesday, March 3, and Tuesday, March 17, 1-2:30pm. Winter Shrub Removal, Pierce Cedar Creek Institute. [Visit PCCI event page](#).

Thursday, March 5, 5-8:30pm. Cultivating Connections: Annual Kalamazoo Conservation District Meeting, AZO Venue, Lounge & Grill. [Visit event web page.](#)

Saturday, March 7, 9am-4pm. Maple Sugar Festival, Kalamazoo Nature Center. [Visit event web page.](#)

Saturday, March 7, and Sunday, March 8. Michigan Native Plant Conference, presented by Wildflower Association of Michigan, Kellogg Convention Center, East Lansing. [Visit event web page.](#)

Sunday, March 8, 10am-12pm. Volunteer Workday, Kleinstuck Preserve. [Visit event web page.](#)

Thursday, March 12, 10-11:30am. Wild Wanderers 5 Senses Walk, Portman Nature Preserve. [Visit event web page.](#)

Monday, March 16, 6:30-8pm. Wild Ones River City Program: "Wet, Wild and Rare: Understanding Michigan's Fens and Bogs." Online. [Visit event web page.](#)

Monday, March 16, 7pm. Michigan Botanical Society Program: "Tallgrass Prairie and Savanna Ecology," 2708 Wood Hall, Western Michigan University. [Visit event web page.](#)

Tuesday, March 17, 6:30-7:30pm. Honorable Harvest Lecture Series: "In the Company of Plants: How Relationships Became Community," 418 E. Walnut St., Kalamazoo. [Visit event web page.](#)

Wednesday, March 18, 7pm. Wild Ones National Webinar: "Rethinking Horticulture with Real Ecology." Online. [Visit event web page.](#)

Thursday, March 19, 6-8pm. Kalamazoo Valley Community Programs Course: "Gardening for Wild Life," KVCC Food Innovation Center. The course begins on March 19 and meets twice more in April and May. [Visit the Community Programs web page](#) (scroll down to view this course).

Tuesday, March 24, 6:30-7:30pm. Honorable Harvest Lecture Series: "From Classroom to Manoomin - Inspiring Children to Connect to the Land," 418 E. Walnut St., Kalamazoo. [Visit event web page.](#)

Saturday, March 28, 10am-3pm. Karing for the Kzoo 2026, organized by Michigan Waterways Stewards, Mayors Riverfront Park. [Visit event web page.](#)

SEEDLINGS is edited by Beth Bradburn. It appears mostly monthly. The next regular issue will arrive in April. Deadline for the April issue is March 20.

Contact the editor

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Ilse Gebhard

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To read past newsletters, [visit the archive](#).

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