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RIVER CITY CHAPTER - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Wild Ones promotes environmentally-sound landscaping practices to preserve biodiversity through the preservation, restoration and establishment of native plant communities and is a not-for-profit environmental education and advocacy organization.

For more information, please contact:

Amy – 616-308-8176 or president@rivercitywildones.org

October 17th Program: *The Business of Producing Native Plants*

NOTE – an early start time of 6:30 pm will occur for this program

Our final educational program of 2011 ends on a high note as we get the opportunity to meet Jerry Stewart, a member of the Michigan Plant Producers Association (MPPA.) Jerry is the owner of Native Connections, an ecological restoration and native landscaping firm located in Three Rivers. He will discuss the process involved in growing Michigan genotype grass seed. We will also learn how that seed is then used in land restoration, wildlife habitat, wetland mitigation, storm water management, and erosion control projects around the state. This will be a great chance to ask questions from an authority on proper seeding and maintenance techniques for large areas!

We will also have in attendance – a return visit from our April speaker, Mary Mckin-

ney Schmidt who, as you recall, regaled us with witty and wise tales of her travels along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan as she photographed the wildflowers she found along the way. Mary's book on this same theme called "Tiny Treasures" was released earlier this year and is selling like hotcakes!! Mary will have copies of her book available for purchase for \$14.99 and she will be signing copies during our social time following the keynote speaker. This book would make a wonderful addition to your home library or as a gift for a nature lover you know! Cash or check will be accepted.

Please join us for this fun and informative night **beginning at the early start time of 6:30 PM** at the Bunker Interpretive Center at Calvin College, 1750 East Beltline Ave SE, Grand Rapids, 49546 ([map](#))

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National Wild Ones Photo Contest—Time to Vote

National headquarters is calling all Wild Ones members. The photos are in for this year's Wild Ones Photo Contest. Come and view the photos – they are beautiful! Narrow your choices down to the one you think is best. Then cast your vote. Don't wait too long – all votes must be in by October 29. To view photos click here – you will be asked to type in your member email address and a password to access the photos and be able to vote: <http://www.wildones.org/members/photo.cgi>



"Milkweed bug finds a home" One of the photo contest entries.

River City Wild Ones News & Notes

River City Wild Ones November Auction

The Fifth Annual RCWO Auction and Social evening will be the **second Monday of November on the 14th at 6:30** (we moved the auction up a week from past years so it does not compete with Thanksgiving holiday plans). It will be held once again at the Bunker Interpretative Center at Calvin College. The auction is our major fund raiser for RCWO projects such as native gardens for schools, public education programs and scholarship grants.

The Silent Auction will formally start at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to come earlier to preview the items and start enjoying all the tasty appetizers and desserts provided by members.

Hopefully you have already been thinking about the auction and are preparing your auction items. Or, maybe you need a few ideas to help you get started? Garden Art (both new and gracefully aged), art work, native plants, crafts, like new garden books, tools, and baked goods or themed gift baskets are all great auction items. Think about a skill or service you can provide that others might value such as garden design, garden services (planting, weeding, pruning), computer consulting, graphic design, craft class, or photography lessons are all sure to have bidders. Should you have question about

a possible donation offering please feel free to call Sue Bouchard at 450-9429 or e-mail Sue@bouchard.com.

There are three ways to get your wonderful donation to the auction:

For the super-efficient, highly talented members who have their projects completed, please feel free to bring them to the October meeting. We will be glad to safely store them until the auction.

If you aren't quite at that stage please feel free to contact me or Amy Heilman 308-8176 or president@rivercitywildones.org and we will be glad to arrange to pick your item(s) up.

Last but not least, you can bring them to the Bunker Center the evening of the auction starting around 6:15 pm.

Past auctions have proven that there are a lot of creative and talented members in our group (and lots of members eager to bid on items). Let's make this a fun and profitable auction and enable RCWO to support all of our great community projects. Encourage your friends to come and enjoy in this fun evening and find some unique holiday presents

River City Wild Ones Assists ArtPrize Artist Michele Brody



The artist, Michele Brody

New York artist Michele Brody called on volunteers from River City Wild Ones to help construct her 3-D art installation titled "Nature Preserve." This work will remain in place at the Urban Institute of Contemporary Art (UICA) until the end of November. It placed in the top 25 of over 300 works within the Heartside District and won the ArtPrize juried award for best three-dimensional work. Native plants were supplied by donations from Cal-

vin College greenhouse - much appreciation and thanks goes out to Dr. Dave Warners, Nate Haan, Barb Olson, Manju Maruliah, Shannon Goodwin and Amy Heilman. More info on Michele can be found at the ArtPrize website.

A cardinal flower in one of the tubes.



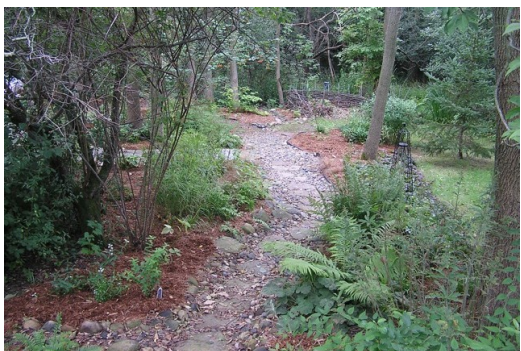
Educational Video Update

Did you wonder why you were being filmed during our last program on woody invasives? River City Wild Ones has been chosen as a client for the fall semester of the GVSU Film and Video class. Film students have been hard at work capturing garden scenes, school garden projects, Wild Ones fieldtrips in action and holding interviews with a variety of folks. The end result will be a short, educational video detailing the importance of bringing native plants back to our

landscape. Our hope is that we can use this as another tool when we speak to groups about Wild Ones and our purpose and mission. We are very fortunate to have been offered this wonderful opportunity by member Deanna Morse, who happens to teach the class! We will plan to show the video to everyone during our February movie and popcorn night – stay tuned!

Look & Learn Tours a Success!

Our first year of Look & Learn tours has been declared a success by those who attended. We toured three wonderful, distinctive gardens that presented a great opportunity to exchange information.



Woodland path in the Osgood Garden.

August found us in the gardens of Ron and Sue Osgood for our second tour. The garden is located at a home on a corner lot. Ron and Sue are excellent tour guides and shared their experiences both good and bad with the multiple types of gardens. Their property includes a variety of gardens including a year old rain garden, a dense shade area, a sunny “hell strip” and a fabulous pond and waterfall that wrap around

two sides of the house. As a bonus many of us went home with grasses from their prolific gardens.

September’s tour was in a smaller urban setting across from John Ball Park. Kristen Tindell offered her garden to us for a unique experience. In six years Kristen and her husband have converted a virtually empty lot into a unique garden. Packed into the yard are numerous areas including native, non-native plants and trees, rain barrels and a compost pile. There are a large variety of native plants including edible ones such as Jerusalem artichokes and serviceberry trees. They are working towards sustainable garden and a “wild food forest”. We munched on their grapes, saw hazelnuts on trees and potatoes under straw mats. Problems of urban gardens may be different from rural but groundhogs seem to like all the gardens visited.

Thanks to all the gardeners who shared their gardens, experience and time with us.

Look & Learn tours will continue next summer with several tentatively planned already. If you are interested in sharing your garden please contact Sue, at 616-450-9429.



Peeking through the coneflowers at Kristen Tindell's garden.



The Osgood's Side Yard.

Upcoming Events

Hands-On Seed Collection Workshop

Date: Tues., Oct 11th **Time:** 2 pm **Location:** Dominican Center at Marywood

We will be offering a hands-on workshop on native seed collection and processing techniques at the beautiful 1 acre prairie located at the Dominican Center at Marywood. Our very knowledgeable member, Chris Baer, will be leading the workshop. Equipment to bring includes gloves, hand pruners, paper sacks for seeds, notebook and pen for taking notes. The address is 2025 E Fulton St. In the event of rain, we will plan to meet on Thur. Oct. 13 at 2 pm. If you have any questions or to RSVP - please contact Amy Heilman at president@rivercitywildones.org or call 616-308-8176.

BIC Fall Clean-Up Volunteer Workday

Date: Sat., Oct 15th **Time:** 8:30 am—noon **Location:** BIC at Calvin College

The Bunker Interpretive Center could use some help preparing for winter and sprucing up the place. Work will mostly be outside raking, weeding, cleaning equipment etc. but there are several indoor projects they need help with too. Tools will be provided just bring your own pair of work gloves if you desired them and wear clothes you do not mind getting dirty. Work will go on even in light rain! Coffee, muffins, tea and a variety of other snacks will be available for your enjoyment. Email preserve@calvin.edu and let Janette know if you plan on volunteering. Help support this great facility that houses our monthly Wild Ones educational programs!!



Bee Balm

Native Plant Workshop at Kent Conservation District

Date: Thurs., Nov 10

Time: 6:30—8 pm

Location: Kent Conservation District

Asters and Goldenrods – oh my! This educational workshop will provide a closer look at fall Asters and Goldenrods. Take your plant ID skills two steps up with expert advice from Stu Kogge, PWS. Stu is the Vice President, Technical Services and Senior Wetland/Aquatic Scientist at Cardno/JFNew and shares his expertise on identifying the varieties found in Michigan with enthusiasm. Refreshments provided, cost is \$5. For further information or to register, please call Connie @ 616.942.4111x100. RSVP not required, but appreciated. Start time is 6:30 pm. More information can be found at <http://www.kentconservation.org/>



New England Aster
(photo: wildflower.org)



Tall Goldenrod
(photo: wildflower.org)

Natives to Know: Native Ferns

Consider adding native Ferns to your garden!

Ferns are the perfect perennial for those shady, damp, hard-to-fill spaces, or areas where grass has succumbed to moss. Ferns come in variety of shapes and sizes, are low maintenance, resistant to deer, and are virtually disease/pest free. In addition, Ferns will provide diversity of form and a feeling of cool tranquility to your landscape.

Ferns are an ancient group of plants dating back 300 million years. They are most closely related to mosses and liverworts. They never have flowers or fruits but instead reproduce by spores, typically produced on the lower side of the fronds or on specialized spore-bearing fronds.

In the wild, Ferns play an important ecological role, both in water-retention and in stabilising mobile surfaces such as landslips, slopes and sand dunes. Ferns also provide shelter and habitat for other species, including a remarkable diversity of invertebrates in the moist soil below --an integral part of the food web in a rich environment.

Each species of Fern has its own preferences for temperature, soil type, moisture, pH, light levels, etc. In fact, in the wild, Ferns are so remarkably reliable in their occurrence with regard to the conditions they prefer, that scientists often use them as “indicator species” for mapping plant communities and measuring environments at the

micro level. This baseline information is valuable for further research and habitat management.

There is an abundance of native Ferns from which to choose. The “Michigan Flora” website, maintained by University of Michigan Herbarium, lists 48 species of Ferns native to Michigan. Many native Ferns prefer light to moderate shade, moist conditions, and soil rich in organic matter. But others thrive in limestone-rich soils or upland dry areas. There are Ferns for just about every condition you encounter in a garden. Some favorites natives include: Cinnamon Fern, (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), Interrupted Fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*), Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum petatum*), and Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*).

Ferns have a complex reproduction cycle, so the easiest way to get more is simply to divide them. They are also available at local garden centers, although native species can be difficult to find. Beware of purchasing non-native Ferns that are invasive including: Japanese Climbing Fern, Azolla or Mosquito Fern, Bracken Fern, New York Fern, and the Old World Climbing Fern. For those who wish to try propagating ferns from spores, the American Fern Society maintains a collection of fresh spores available at a nominal fee.

-Joyce Tuharsky



Cinnamon Fern
(photo: wildflower.org)

More Ferns

More information and photos on Ferns available at:

homepage.mac.com/chpeirce/ferns/index.html
(Michigan Fern Index)

<http://michiganflora.net/maps.aspx> (University of Michigan Herbarium)

<http://www.amerfernsoc.org/>
(American Fern Society)