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Newsletter - Kim Davidson
Ways & Means - Meribeth Bolt & Sue Bouchard
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Melanie Manion - Natural Resources Manager Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission
Steve Mueller - Environmental Education Consultant and Award Winning Interpreter
Patricia Pennell - Environmental Consultant, Photographer, Botanist, Eco-friendly Landscaper



RIVER CITY CHAPTER - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

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

For more information, please contact:

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

Gretchen - 616-240-2181 or membership@rivercitywildones.org

www.rivercitywildones.org / www.wildones.org (National Headquarters)

facebook.com/rivercitywildones

February Program; The Marywood Prairie Habitat

Monday, February 17, 2014 - 7:00 PM - Bunker Interpretive Center
Calvin College - 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE

After a two month winter break, we welcome back members and friends to the regular RCWO monthly educational programs!

As we munch popcorn (a February tradition!) and dream of spring and green, growing things - we will be presented a program on the history and evolution of the Marywood Prairie Habitat which is located on the campus of the Dominican Center here in Grand Rapids. Sister Lucille Janowiak and Darcy Dye will delight our senses with this lovely presentation. This little prairie in the big city is quite a special site and it's tale of how it got started, it's struggles, and triumphs is an inspiring one!

Elections will also be held for the two vacant positions on the Board; that of President and Secretary. It is not too late to add a name for nomination! We will also get an opportunity to learn about some possible chapter projects and events coming up this year and take some time to discuss whatever is on our members minds..be it questions, concerns, ideas we have regarding how our chapter operates, what projects we are involved in, programs we want to have and even personal garden dilemmas we have.

We have a lot to cover so I hope I will see you all at the BIC in a week! Amy

www.rivercitywildones.org



(Photo courtesy of Patricia Pennell)

March Program ~ Native Plants and Pollinators: A Beautiful and Beneficial Connection



3/17/2014 - 7:00 PM - Bunker Interpretive Center at Calvin College 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE

Dr. Rufus Isaacs, Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Entomology, Michigan State University. Exploring the science and natural beauty found in the relationships between many of our native plants and native pollinators.

(Images: gpnc.org & beneficialbugs.org)

We Are On Facebook at Last!

facebook.com/rivercitywildones

Have you had a chance to check out our chapter's Face Book page??? Go to facebook.com/rivercitywildones and "like" us! Next time you see her, thank Patricia Pennell for setting up and administering this informative page. It will help us connect to the wider community and keep everyone "up-to-date" on what we are doing, learning and saying. If any members are interested in posting articles they find of interest or want to add great plant photos they have taken, have great quotes to share or know upcoming classes or workshops of interest...just contact Patricia and she will give you access to post these items. We would love lots of input from you all!

Sparta Kids are Butterfly Heroes!!

[CLICK HERE](#) to view a video showcasing how Sparta students are helping to "Bring Back the Butterflies!"



(Photo courtesy of Ranger Steve Mueller -cedarspringspost.com)

River City Wild Ones Book Fundraiser

Available for purchase at our February meeting!!

Airplanes in the Garden – Monarch Butterflies Take Flight

By Joan Z. Calder

Illustrated by Cathy Quiel

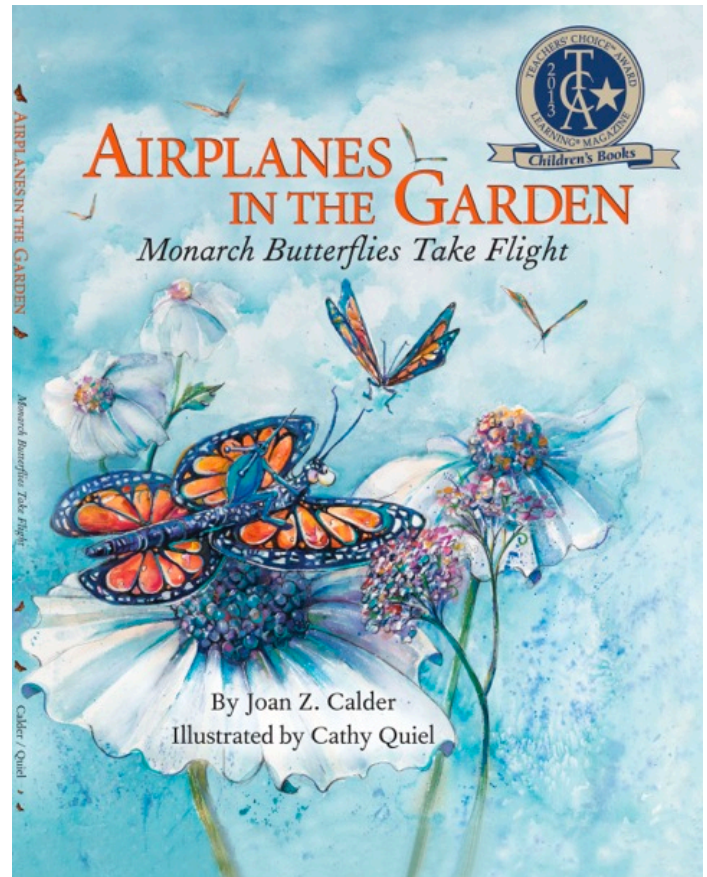
The discovery of a monarch butterfly egg on a milkweed plant teaches a young girl about metamorphosis. Readers will discover a unique children's nonfiction picture book, containing vibrant watercolor not typically found in a children's book. Correct terminology explains metamorphosis (egg to caterpillar to chrysalis to butterfly) in a fun to read story.

The book also includes:

- An informative section with migration maps
- Helpful tips to grow your own butterfly-friendly garden
- A butterfly song, which can be downloaded from the web
- Web addresses to learn more about monarch butterflies.

Winner of the Learning® Magazine 2013 Teachers' ChoiceSM for Children's Books Award.

The Teachers' Choice Awards honor products of exceptional quality and outstanding performance in the classroom and at home! *"Our panel of teacher evaluators use each product in their classrooms and homes to find the best products for teachers and parents."*



2013 Mom's Choice Awards® Gold Recipient.

The Mom's Choice Awards® (MCA) evaluates products and services created for children and families. The program is globally recognized for establishing the benchmark of excellence in family-friendly media, products and services. The organization is based in

The United States and has reviewed thousands of entries from more than 18 countries.

- Hardcover, 32 Pages
- Retail - \$16.95
- Wild Price - \$15.00 and signed by the author
- ISBN: 978-0-9832962-1-8
- Written for 4 - 8 year-olds but appeals to all ages

Questions? – Meribeth Bolt, meribethbolt@aol.com or Sue Bouchard, sue@bouchard.com

Ranger Steve's Nature Niche - Restoring Life in Your Yard

By Ranger Steve Mueller

The joy of this past year with friends and family provides satisfaction and contentment. Immediately we anticipate what the coming year holds. We determined much of the future by our activities. Grandiose plans are forming. Some are just a start towards healthier days for our family, community, nation, and the world in fragile finite environments that support us.

Everything begins close at hand here at home. Look around and notice not much human activity takes place in yards. Most of us hide away in the warmth and comfort of our shelter with tasty food tucked away. We are like the Eastern Chipmunk that makes fewer ventures outside during late fall and we might also stay hidden inside during the coldest snowy days of winter.

The chipmunk stored food for the short days and long cold nights and is now curled in a snug ball in its underground fortress. It will remain active, eat and wait for a spring emergence. She will not hibernate but will sleep with little else to do. It has aided root health by tunneling and aerating the soil.

We do not need to sleep away the beauty and marvel of winter. We can venture to hidden corners of our yard enjoying evidence of abundant life. Tracks on snow, tunnels under it, sightings of squirrels in trees keep us entertained and aware that we do not live alone in the world.

The more native plants you allow to survive in the yard allow for an abundance of animal life. There is beauty in a manicured grass lawn and feeling of space that gives comfort to us even when it is under inches of snow. A lawn, however, is an almost sterile world that is crowding life off the planet.

Lawns often have little human activity except on workdays when we mow them with power mowers that expel carbon greenhouse gas into the air. Tom Small describes US lawns collectively as 45 million acres of "No man's land." It might be better to identify them as sterile land lacking suitable nature niches for sustaining biodiversity to support us and fellow inhabitants of Earth.

Small states that lawns are a vast, sterile, industrialized monoculture that robs soil of nutrients, robs streams of water, robs the region's creatures of habitat, and robs the neighborhood of community.

It impressed me when I took a group of middle school students including two from Cedar Springs on an educational trip to the rain forest and rural communities in Belize. In a

poor rural community we observed women with children gathered in a yard with flower hedges along the property boundary. Neighbor's yards were without flowers and shrubs and were devoid of people. People usually do not gather on empty lawns to visit and pass time even here in the US. We like to be among life and beauty.

During the New Year, plan to restore the yard with an abundance of life that preceded settlement of our town and rural surroundings. Most yards now use natural resources without giving back or paying it forward for the health of coming generations. We often give gifts and community support for those in need. Consider giving vital inheritance for coming generations. Squandering the soil, nutrients, air, and water quality steals economic and physical health from unborn generations. Unfortunately, beautiful lawns reduce life on Earth. Let nature into your yard this coming year and restore life. It starts at home.

The creatures that fill nature niches replenish nutrient cycles, brighten our days, and maintain clean air and water. Fellow inhabitants of Earth are money in the bank for a sustainable future. They are the savings account of our kids. This new year, plan to replace sections of the lawn with native plants to restore health in the yard. You will enjoy birds and the air will fill with the songs of nature during day and night.

Natural history questions or topic suggestions can be directed to Ranger Steve (Mueller) at odybrook@chartermi.net Ody Brook, 13010 Northland Dr, Cedar Springs, MI 49319-8433. (616)-696-1753

Written for WILD Ones Newsletter Article - Winter 2014.



(Photo courtesy of Ranger Steve Mueller)

Natives to Know - Phlox (Phlox species)

By Joyce Tuharsky

Phlox may seem like old school gardening, but butterflies don't care! You can find a Phlox for almost every season and garden location to help provide a path for pollinators as they move through your landscape.

There are over 60 species of Phlox, most of which are native to North America (one from Siberia). There are tall species with thick, glossy leaves; and species that spread across the ground with needle-like leaves. Phlox can bloom in shady woods in April or be a midsummer sun-lover. Its flowers colors range from pale blue and violet, to pink, bright red and white.

The Phlox flower has a classic butterfly structure. It has flared petals that function as a landing pad for insects and a long narrow tube that is accessible to the long proboscis of butterflies, moths and skippers; long-tongued bumblebees; and hummingbirds. Most Phlox flowers are fragrant and many have "nectar guides" or dark marks around the corolla opening. But the Phlox's charms aren't restricted to daytime. The sweet scent and pale-colored or white star-shaped blossoms draw many moths even after dark.

A delicate-looking plant, Phlox blossoms occur in loose, rounded clusters. All forms of Phlox have flowers with five petals on a tubular base. The flowers are approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in width and extend laterally from the stem. The leaves of the Phlox genus are small, lanceolate, and oppositely arranged. The Phlox genus typically has a long blooming season, are easy to care for, multiply readily, and are good as cut flowers. Most Phlox are perennials.

However, because of its commercial desirability, Phlox has been significantly hybridized. So refer to the following list to select species that are native to Michigan. (This list was compiled from information on

websites of the US Department of Agriculture and University of Michigan "Herbarium".)

Sand or Cleft Phlox (*P. bifida*) Mat-forming phlox that grows only 6" tall. Spreads by trailing stems and self-seeding. Pale blue to almost white flowers. Each flower petal has a deep notch to 1/8" long. Blooms in May. Prefers well-drained, sandy or loamy soil. Full sun. Excellent for rock gardens or perennial borders. Listed on the State of Michigan's Threatened Species list.

Wild Blue or Woodland Phlox (*P. divaricata*) A valuable early-season source of nectar. This Midwest native has periwinkle-blue flowers and glossy, lance-like leaves. Forms slowly-spreading clumps that make a good ground cover to 18" high. Prefers humus-rich soil. Full to partial sun.

Annual Phlox (*P. drummondii*) Blooms from midsummer and into fall if deadheaded. Flower color ranges from white and cream, pinks, purples, reds to almost black. Prefers full sun, rich soil. Wild seed from this American species was first sent to Europe in 1835, where it was cultivated as a prized "exotic" for 150 years.

Wild-Sweet-William (*P. maculata*) Blooms in early summer with mounds of dark-pink blossoms. Prefers moist rich soil. Full sun or partial shade. If deadheaded, may bloom again in autumn. Listed on the State of Michigan's Threatened Species list.

Natives to Know - Continued

By Joyce Tuharsky

Garden Phlox (*P. paniculata*) Native to the eastern half of the U.S. Reaches as high as 5 feet. Prefers rich well-drained soil. Full to partial sun. Blooms for several weeks from mid- to late summer. Known to attract Swallowtails, Painted Ladies, Great Spangled Fritillaries, sulphurs and skippers. Easy to propagate from cuttings.

Prairie Phlox (*P. pilosa*) Robust, drought tolerant prairie native that prefers well-drained soils and full sun. Grows 1-2 ft. tall. Pale pink to lavender flowers bloom in late spring or early summer for 1-1½ months. Stems are upright and sometimes branch near the top. Leaves/stems are covered with hairs. Stems are sticky. This plant has a taproot.

Moss Phlox (*P. subulata*) A low plant forming moss-like mats with pink to lavender (rarely white) flowers in clusters at stem ends, collectively forming a continuous carpet of flowers. Leaves with flat blades.

More information on Phlox:

<http://butterflywebsite.com/articles/bgg/Phlox.htm>

<http://carolynsshadegardens.com/2012/04/10/native-phlox-for-your-garden/>

<http://michiganflora.net/genus.aspx?id=Phlox>

Information about pollinators and pollinator plants lists:

<http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm>

<http://www.pollinatorpathway.com/resources/plants>



Sand / Cleft Phlox



Prairie Phlox



Annual Phlox

(Photos - B.S. Walters / Michiganflora.net)

Cures for Cabin Fever!!

Take Part in The Great Backyard Bird Count - February 14 - 17, 2014

Launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count was the first online citizen-science project to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time.

Since then, more than 100,000 people of all ages and walks of life have joined the four-day count each February to create an annual snapshot of the distribution and abundance of birds - www.gbbc.birdcount.org

The Wildflower Association of Michigan Presents: Becoming Native to the Place! 27th Annual Wildflower Conference and Educator's Workshop

March 2 & 3, 2014 at The Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center at Michigan State University

[Click HERE](#) for the complete program line up and registration form

Becoming Native to the Place is the theme for the 27th annual Wildflower Conference. World renowned landscape design consultant, author, photographer and lecturer Rick Darke will provide a keynote presentation on Sunday and Monday. Rick was the keynote speaker in 2004. Most recently he has teamed up with Douglas Tallamy on a new book, *The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden* which is expected to be in bookstores June 2014. 2014 Smart Gardening Conference

The MSU Extension "Smart Gardening" Conference will be held in conjunction with the West Michigan Home Show on Saturday, March 8 from 8:15 a.m.-4:00 p.m. in Ballroom C/D (Note: New Location. Ballroom C/D located on main floor of DeVos Place - 303 Monroe Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503)

The 2014 presenters are:

Melinda Myers, *Nationally known gardening expert, Birds and Bloom magazine columnist*; speaking on **"Create a Smart Garden with Year Round Interest"**

Dr. George Bird, *Michigan State University, Department of Entomology*; speaking on **"Smart Soils and Good Practices: Keys to Building a High Quality-Sustainable Garden"**

Chuck Martin, *Horticulturist at the Dow Gardens*; speaking on **"Practicing Phenology is Fun!"**

Dr. Douglas Tallamy, *Department of Entomology Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and Author of Bringing Nature Home*; speaking on **"Smart Gardening for Life"**

Click on the link to download a copy of the [Smart Garden Conference brochure](#) and registration form. Questions should be directed to Ginny Wanty at 616-336-3108 or wanty@anr.msu.edu

2014 River City Wild Ones Program Calendar

All programs (unless otherwise specified) will begin at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Monday of each month, February - November. Non-members are always welcome! Find more information for each event under “Wild Events” on our website.

Date	Speaker / Topic	Location
Feb 17	Sr. Lucille Janowiak / Darcy Dye Presentation on the evolution of the Marywood Prairie Habitat which is located on the campus of the Dominican Center in Grand Rapids	Bunker Interpretive Center - Calvin College 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Grand Rapids
March 17	Dr. Rufus Isaacs, Professor and Extension Specialist, Department of Entomology, MSU. Native Plants and Pollinators: A Beautiful and Beneficial Connection	Bunker Interpretive Center - Calvin College 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Grand Rapids
April 21	Lee Mueller, Certified Arborist and Program Manager for Friends of GR Parks. Overview of the GR Urban Forest Project and update on the health of West Michigan forests.	Bunker Interpretive Center - Calvin College 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Grand Rapids
May 19	3rd Annual Garlic Mustard Fling and Native Plant Exchange	Location: TBA (Check website for updates)
June 16	Kim Davidson, Horticulturist, Ironwood Golf Course and MSU Educator. Native Tree I.D. tour on the Aquinas College campus	Sturris Sports and Fitness Center Parking Lot, Aquinas College - 1580 Fulton St. G.R. 49506
July 21	Look, Learn, & Libations! Join us for a tour of our Native Plant Demonstration Garden located in the front of the Inner City Christian Federation Building. Afterward, stroll across the street to Brewery Vivant for more native plant education and a fundraiser for RCWO.	Note - Early Start time - 5:00 PM 920 Cherry St SE, Grand Rapids 49506
August 18	Erik Cronk, Principal and Green Roof Consultant AGA - Advanced Green Architecture. Learn how a green roof can be an excellent home for native plants and how it can even support a diverse native garden designated as a Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation	Standale Area - More details TBA (Check website for updates)
September 15	Speaker to be Determined Field Trip to ID Aster and Goldenrod species, we will also be collecting seed for local projects!	Note - Early Start time - 6:30 PM Location TBA (Check website for updates)
October 20	8th Annual “Not So Silent” Auction	Doors open at 6:30 PM Auction begins at 7:00 PM Bunker Interpretive Center - Calvin College 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids
November 17	Dr. Garrett Crow PhD, University of New Hampshire Professor and Visiting Scholar to Calvin College. In the Footsteps of 19th Century Explorers on the Amazon	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids