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[Patricia Pennell](#) - Award Winning Environmental Educator, Photographer, Botanist, and Consultant



## 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:

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[www.rivercitywildones.org](http://www.rivercitywildones.org) / [www.wildones.org](http://www.wildones.org) (National Headquarters)

[facebook.com/rivercitywildones](https://facebook.com/rivercitywildones)

## October Program

Used Book Sale Plus Food, Friends, and Fun  
Monday, October 20, 2014 - 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Bunker Interpretive Center - Calvin College - 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE



- Enjoy substantial appetizers and yummy desserts
- Browse books priced \$0.50 to \$4.00 with a few higher priced gems
- Watch a photo presentation of past field trips
- Share a RCWO evening with your friends
- Surprises!

## You can help:

- *Bring an appetizer or dessert*
- *Invite your friends*

## Questions:

[Sue Bouchard](#), 450-9429

[Meribeth Bolt](#), 450-3001

November Program - Monday, November 17, 2014 - 7:00 p.m.  
Bunker Interpretive Center - Calvin College - 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE

## In the Footsteps of 19th Century Explorers on the Amazon with Dr. Garret Crow, PhD

University of New Hampshire Professor and Visiting Scholar to Calvin College

In the Footsteps of 19th Century Explorers on the Amazon - Join us on a fascinating journey and natural history trip to the Amazon River organized by Dr. Scott Mori of the New York Botanical Garden and experience some interesting tropical and aquatic native plant life that were encountered.

## RCWO Receives Grant from the West Michigan Butterfly Association



River City Wild Ones received a generous grant from the West Michigan Butterfly Association (WMBA) for a proposal submitted by member Meribeth Bolt. The project consists of three additions to our Native Plant Education Garden (NPEG) as follows:

1) The addition of a second metal tag to the plant name stake to identify the butterfly species the native plant supports. The tag will display both the scientific and common names of the butterfly.

2) Expand the collection of butterfly host plants and shrubs in the garden.

3) Create a Native Plant Education Garden brochure. The brochure will contain information about our native plant and butterfly host plant collections to outline the dependence of native butterfly species on native plants for egg laying, chrysalis formation, caterpillar nourishment and butterfly nectaring. The brochure will promote the use of safe garden practices and elimination of pesticides to protect all pollinator, bird, animal and human populations. A QR code will be created for the brochure and displayed on a garden sign for immediate access to our website for additional information and resources.

Because our garden is in a high traffic, easily visible and accessible urban area it welcomes many visitors. We expect the added butterfly information to the plant tags will inspire and encourage the planting of more butterfly gardens. In addition, we hope our garden will become a resource destination for our members, WMBA members and other community groups.

*Photo & Article courtesy of Meribeth Bolt*



## August Program Overview - The What & Why of Green Roofs

By Ron Cammel

With a house under their feet, Wild Ones participants enjoyed native plants, a “turf” of colorful sedums, stone pathways, bee nests, a small pond and a bench to relax on. The atmosphere on Tom Newhouse’s artistically landscaped roof was surprisingly pleasant.

Tom hosted the August WO meeting to show the environmental and aesthetic benefits of a green roof. His Tallmadge Township home needs little air conditioning and holds heat well because of the inches of soil and the solid greenery on his slightly sloped roof.

He paid about \$16 per square foot to have Advanced Green Architecture of Grand Rapids install TPO membrane, plastic panels that hold and drain moisture, a layer of growing media and dozens of types of plants. AGA co-owner Erik Cronk expects the roof to last 50 years because the membrane is protected from the sun and temperature fluctuations.

Last year’s installation was the first renovation of the roof since Tom built the house in the 1970s – with a green roof. Green roofs are noted for filtering rain water, preventing runoff and reducing the “heat island effect” in cities. In this case, the five-year-old AGA is experimenting with native plants to see if the benefits can include habitat and food for wildlife.



Tom Newhouse (L) with Erik Cronk (R), Tom’s green roof includes many natives along with a pond and native bee houses!  
*Photos Courtesy of Patricia Pennell*



## September Program Overviews - Aster and Goldenrod Identification with Dr. Dave Warners, Professor of Biology, Calvin College AND 2nd Look & Learn -Tour of Ody Brook Nature Sanctuary

Dr. Dave Warners did double duty for RCWO in September and not only lead us on a wonderful tour at Calvin's Bunker Center to learn how to identify Asters and Goldenrods but also filled in as our tour guide at Ranger Steve Mueller's property (Ody Brook Nature Sanctuary) while Ranger Steve was recovering from a broken leg. Thank You Dave for being such a wonderful and informative guide and Thank you Ranger Steve for hosting our group at Ody Brook!



*(Photos Courtesy of  
Patricia Pennell)*

## Our First Plant Rescue By Meribeth Bolt

River City Wild Ones members answered an urgent call to help rescue native plants just a few days ahead of the bulldozers. Members worked from August 19 through August 24th, during the hottest week of the summer, to rescue over 250 plants from the new Cascade YMCA building site on Burton at Kraft in Cascade Township. After reading an article in the Grand Rapids Press about the new Y location and a few phone calls later a meeting was scheduled with the project director, our president Mike Bruggink and fellow member Patricia Pennell who is a biologist, wetland expert, and professional photographer. After meeting at the building site we received permission to do the rescue!

Donna VanBuecken, Executive Director of the Wild Ones national office emailed a confirmation of our general liability insurance coverage. Only current Wild Ones members have coverage – another valuable member benefit. All plant rescuers signed waivers before rolling up their sleeves to dig.

The YMCA property consists of dry sand prairie, old growth forest and a high quality wetland. A rush found in the wetland was not easily identified. Dr. Dave Warners of Calvin College took samples of the plant and a few days later he identified it as *Juncus biflorus* – Two-flowered rush a high quality number 9 (on a 10 point scale).

Approximately eight years ago this same parcel of land was bulldozed for a condo complex that didn't materialize due to the financial crash. The

land sat for 8 years without disturbance. Every day spent on the rescue I was more awestruck by the power of the seed bank. The plants proliferated in perfect combinations in the right place for the right plant. Unfortunately, we could rescue only a handful of what was there and the day after we put our shovels down the bulldozers rolled in to make way for ball fields, buildings and parking lots. The plants that were rescued from the heavy equipment will go toward our community projects. We have offered to return some of the plants back to the YMCA for use as a pollinator education garden. You can see photos of our plant rescue, and many other field trips taken by Patricia Pennell (Riverhouse Photography), on our [Facebook page](#).

**The following is a partial list of the plants on the property; we were unable to save any trees or shrubs.**

***Monarda punctata* - Horse mint**

***Verbena hastata* - Blue vervain**

***Artemisia campestris* - Wormwood**

***Oenothera clelandii* - Evening-primrose**

***Eragrostis spectabilis* - Purple love grass/Tumble grass**

***Lespedeza capitata* - Round-headed bush clover**

***Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium* - Sweet everlasting**

***Oxypolis rigidior* - Cow bane**

***Euphorbia corollata* - Flowering spurge**

***Helianthus occidentalis* - Western sunflower**

***Eupatorium perfoliatum* - Boneset**

***Veronia missurica* - Missouri ironweed**

***Juncus biflorus* - Two-flowered rush**



# Our First Plant Rescue - Continued

(Photos Courtesy of Patricia Pennell)

Member Meribeth Bolt and Chapter Advisor Melanie Manion working hard to rescue natives from the site





## Natives to Know - Bunch Berry (Cornus canadensis) By Joyce Tuharsky

The smallest member of the dogwood family, Bunchberry Dogwood is a slow-growing perennial that grows to about 8 inches tall. It has the classic dogwood leaf and flower, except in miniature....whorls of shiny green, broad, pointed leaves; and tiny clusters of greenish-yellow flower heads surrounded by white bracts that are often mistaken for petals.

The above-ground stems are slender and unbranched, rising from slender creeping rhizomes that are ½ to 2 inches deep in the soil. The develop woody growth rings. Specimens have been found which are over 15 feet and 36 years old!

Bunchberry Dogwood often covers the ground in a carpet of green, which is quite lovely when in bloom from early May through July. Later in summer, orange-red berries (actually drupes) form in tight bunches....hence the plant's common name. In fall, the leaves turn yellow to orange to a beautiful burgundy-red.

Often inhabiting coniferous forests, Bunchberry Dogwood needs partial shade and cool, moist, acidic soils. It is sometimes found growing in rotting "nurse logs" or in mossy joints of tree branches, which may help its roots find compatible fungus. The plant is native throughout most of Canada and the northern tier of the United States, pushing south along mountain ranges. It is also found in northeastern Asia.

Largely self-sterile, this plant depends on pollinators for sexual reproduction, including bumblebees, solitary bees, bee flies, and syrphid flies. Song and game birds are the main dispersal agents of the seeds, often consuming the fruit during their fall migration. The plant is important forage for many ungulates such as white-tailed deer, mule deer, and

moose. Chipmunks, martens, and rabbits feed on bunchberry stems and fruits. Bear eat the fruit.

Bunchberries are edible by humans and were eaten by Native Americans. While some people consider the berries mealy and tasteless, others enjoy the juicy fruit in jam or as trail nibble. New England colonists found that adding a few bunchberries to pudding would help it jell....Evidently, the little berry has a good dose of pectin in it.

Bunchberry Dogwood has been called the "fastest moving plant in the world." Its stamens are like miniature catapults that eject pollen to 10 times the height of the plant, so that the pollen can be carried on the wind. The "catapulting" motion takes place in less than half a millisecond, moving at 22 feet per second.

Because of low germination and seedling survival rates, Bunchberry Dogwood is most easily propagated by division. Take the plant with its roots along with some surrounding soil. Mulch with peat moss or pine needles. Water thoroughly during dry periods.

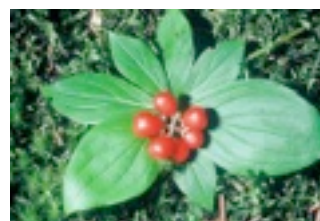
### For more information and photos:



<http://uswildflowers.com/detail.php?SName=Cornus%20canadensis>

<http://www.rook.org/earl/bwca/nature/shrubs/cornuscan.html>

<http://www.fs.fed.us/database/feis/plants/forb/corcan/all.html>



(Photos Courtesy of:  
[www.whiteflowerfarm.com](http://www.whiteflowerfarm.com) &  
[www.naturewatch.ca](http://www.naturewatch.ca))

## Wild Ones 35th Anniversary Celebration and Annual Conference August 15-17 at the national headquarters in Neenah, WI By Nancy Bedell

Photos of our two visits to Wild Ones National Headquarters in July and August. The blonde woman is Catherine Zimmerman who is filming native projects nationwide for her "Hometown Habitat" Project to be aired on PBS. Our chapter has agreed to donate \$250 to the project via national. For more information on the project go to ([www.themeadowproject.com](http://www.themeadowproject.com)). Be proud of the beautiful Wild Center site and all the work that has gone into making our organization highly respected!



Nancy (L), National President  
Tim Lewis (R), The Wild Center,  
Catherine Zimmerman (Bottom)





## Upcoming Dates to Remember!!



**Mute  
Swans**

**Canada  
Geese**

**Cormorants**

## What's the Big Deal?

Please join the

*West Michigan Cluster of The Stewardship Network*

**Annual Fall Feature • Friday, November 7, 2014**

**7:00 to 9:00 PM, program starts 7:30**

**Hemlock Crossing County Park**

**8115 West Olive Road • West Olive, MI 49460**

**Pete Butchko, State Director of Michigan Wildlife Services, will speak on sorting through the fact and fiction related to human conflicts with birds.**

Pay \$5.00 at the door but pre-register at [www.stewardshipnetwork.org](http://www.stewardshipnetwork.org) (Click on "Clusters at the top of the page, choose West MI Cluster and proceed to "Cluster Events" to confirmed your space.)

This event is a fund raiser for West Michigan Cluster of The Stewardship Network. Your \$5.00 donation paid at the door, helps raise funds for WMC projects, and pays for costs associated with hosting this annual event.

The West MI Cluster of The Stewardship Network is a diverse group of private and public organizations dedicated to preserving, restoring and managing Michigan's natural land and water.



**West Michigan Cluster of  
The Stewardship Network**  
Connect to Conserve

**East Lansing, Michigan / January 23-24, 2015**



The Science, Practice, & Art of  
**Restoring Native  
Ecosystems 2015**

[www.stewardshipnetworkconference.org](http://www.stewardshipnetworkconference.org)

### 2014 Christmas Bird Count for Kent County

January 3, 2015 at the Wittenbach/Wege Agriscience and Environmental Center, 11715 Vergennes Rd, Lowell, MI 49331. Field Teams depart at 8:00 AM with friends and knowledgeable birders. Section findings are tallied at 5:00 PM. Direct inquiries to Tom Legget at (616) 249-3382 or [tomlegget@hotmail.com](mailto:tomlegget@hotmail.com)

Grand Rapids Audubon Club

[www.glsa.org/grac](http://www.glsa.org/grac)

### 28th ANNUAL MICHIGAN WILDFLOWER CONFERENCE SAVE THE DATE

The **2015 WAM Conference** will take place on Sunday, March 8th and Monday, March 9th. We are excited to announce **Darrell Morrison** will be our keynote. This year's conference theme: Landscape Design: Where Art and Nature Meet

Check the website for updates as the conference agenda develops: [www.wildflowersmich.org](http://www.wildflowersmich.org)

### West Michigan Home and Garden Show

March 5 - 8, 2015

Devos Place - Grand Rapids



This is the last newsletter of the year! We will see you in February 2015!

Submission Deadline for Feb/March 2015 newsletter articles: February 1, 2015