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tor



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](mailto:president@rivercitywildones.org)

### June 20th Program: *A Revisit to Our Prairie Home Companions*

We all fondly remember our trip last September to the home of Carol and Fritz Rottman where we toured the 17 acre prairie they established over a 10 years period. At that time the native grasses were putting on a spectacular show for us. Now is our opportunity to be thrilled by a diversity of blooming prairie forbs. Crack open your Newcomb's Wildflower Guide and practice plant identification, take copious photos, spot some beneficial bugs or song birds... or just relax and take in the sites on this 70 acre property which also includes a rain garden, kettle lake with native wetland plants and surrounding woodlands.



Photo courtesy of Carol Rottman

We will also learn of current research being carried out on this property by Calvin College students and get an overview of another environmental organization – the Michigan Nature Association (MNA) by a member of this group, John Bagley.

We have asked Carol Rottman to have copies of her book - *All Nature Sings: A Spiritual*

*Journey of Place*, available for purchase again. Many of these books were purchased last year by members for themselves but they make a wonderful gift to give too! The book details the history and creation of this unique piece of property. To learn more about her, the book and so see some beautiful photos taken on the property; visit her blog at [www.carolrottman.com](http://www.carolrottman.com).

The terrain of this site is generally level with stone paths that take you through the plantings around the residence, mowed paths take you through the prairie and an overhanging deck allow views of water plants. Wear sturdy footwear, bring mosquito repellent and carry rain gear in the event of light rain. Heavy rain will cancel the program.

The address for this event is [11300 Hart St., Greenville, 48838](https://www.google.com/maps/place/11300+Hart+St.,+Greenville,+MI+48838) and the program will start at 7 pm. Be advised that the residence is set back from the main road and the driveway is narrow. Native plants flank each side of the paved drive - so use caution when entering and exiting. Please carpool because space is limited. Angle park on the grass alongside the barn.

**Remember to come prepared at these meetings for hiking, possible inclement weather and bring your water or sport drink. As always, some tempting goodies will be provided.**

## *Park Event Supported by River City Wild Ones*



Newly elected VP – Eileen Schmuker, gave away dozens of white pines to excited kids.

On May 16<sup>th</sup> the Bear Creek Water Festival was held in Townsend Park near Canonsburg. This is a Kent County Park and the festival was held to showcase the importance of the life sustaining water that flows through our creeks, rivers, lakes and watersheds. For the second year, our Wild Ones chapter set up a table to give visitors information on all the ways native plants help contribute to clean water – such as stabilizing riverbanks and filtering pollutants with their extensive root systems. We also gave out White Pine saplings (generously provided by chapter President, Amy Heilman) to the children that visited our table. The festival was well attended and people were very much interested in the native plant movement and invasive species management. Wild Ones members provided answers and encouragement to those that

stopped by. It was a gorgeous day and another way that Wild Ones members can help children and adults learn about and support Michigan's wonderful native plants.

- Barb Olson



Barb Olson shares advice and enthusiasm at the Bear Creek Water Festival.



Jeffersonia from RCWO member Sue Bouchard's garden this spring.

## *Latest News from National in Wisconsin*

Good news! we have hit the magic number of 3,000 national members - actually 3,029! Please congratulate yourselves for helping us get over the "hump." That number is only as good as long as current members keep their memberships active, however. So, please keep your membership current and don't forget about gift memberships to neighbors, friends and family. Now that we've managed to get over the "hump," let's all work together to continue to grow that number so we as a national organization can

keep spreading the word about the benefits of native plants and natural landscaping.

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This year's entry date for the Wild Ones Photo Contest is August 3rd so get your cameras out and start taking those photos. Last year we had over fantastic 130 photos - the most to date! Let's beat that total this year. Send your 2011 entries to: [photocontest@wildones.org](mailto:photocontest@wildones.org)

## *Grass Detectives Needed!*

Michigan Members — UI researcher Lauren Quinn needs help locating escaped individuals or whole populations of *Miscanthus sinensis* and/or *M. sacchariflorus* in natural areas in Michigan. Information she needs: Location (GPS coordinates, if possible. If not, then an intersection or other landmark), description of environmental context, population, names, contact info of owners if possible, estimate of history of population (how long there, where's nearest planting and when it was planted), photo of population, and your contact info. You can email Lauren Quinn at [ldquinn@illinois.edu](mailto:ldquinn@illinois.edu).

*Miscanthus sinensis*



*Miscanthus sacchariflorus*, also known as silver banner grass.





## *Natives to Know: American Bladdernut* (*Staphylea trifolia*)

The American Bladdernut is an attractive small understory tree, sometimes considered a tall shrub, which is native to eastern North America from Minnesota and southern Ontario, south to Louisiana and Florida.

Although typically growing 6 to 12 feet high, this deciduous tree can reach 20 feet. It has a loose irregular branch structure and smooth gray bark that becomes fissured with age. The twigs are green to chocolate brown with white stripes and rings at the nodes.

The American Bladdernut can be identified by its leaves which are opposite, palmately compound with three leaflets. Other native shrubs/small trees have alternate leaves, simple leaves, or compound leaves with more leaflets. The Bladdernut's leaflets are dark green, broadly ovate with a long-pointed tip, 2-4 inches long, finely toothed and pubescent (hairy) on the underside. The foliage remains green late into autumn eventually turning a pale yellow.

In late spring, the American Bladdernut produces small, bell-shaped white flowers with five petals and protruding stamens. These flowers droop downward abundantly on 1 to 2 inch panicles in beautiful nodding clusters.

By mid-June, the flowers give way to highly distinctive 3- pointed, inflated, bladder-like (thus the name) seed capsules (1-3" long). These papery capsules dry out and turn brown in late summer. Inside, 1-4 pale

brown, shiny seeds eventually become loose and rattle in the wind. The showy seed capsules add interest to the autumn landscape and are often used in dried flower arrangements.

In the wild, American Bladdernut is found in moist mesic woodlands, floodplain woodlands, riverbanks, and thickets along with Sycamores, Silver Maple, Sugar Maple, or American Basswood. The flowers provide nectar and pollen to insects and bees, including honeybees and bumblebees. Grouse use the foliage for cover, and squirrels have been known to eat the nuts. Deer tend to leave this plant alone.

The American Bladdernut is not only decorative with its white flowers in spring and interesting capsules, but responds well to clipping. Thus, it is an excellent native choice for landscape borders or trained as a small tree. It is also a good understory tree in woodland gardens or next to patio seating. Easy to grow, Bladdernuts tolerate a wide variety of soils, though prefers well-drained moist soils, part to full shade, and higher pH soil. Propagation is by seeds or cuttings. Prune in early spring to shape or maintain as a small tree.

Its scientific name *Staphylea* is from a Greek phrase meaning "cluster of grapes" referring to the drooping flowers. *Trifolia* refers to the three leaflets.

- Joyce Tuharsky



American Bladdernut  
photo: wildflower.org

### More American Bladdernut

More information and photos on Spring Beauty are available at:

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=STTR>

<http://www.duke.edu/~cwcook/trees/sttr.html>

<http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/trees/plants/bladdernut.html>

## *Volunteers Needed for June 25/26 Plant Sale*

The [Grand River Water Festival](#) is taking place at the Lowell Fairgrounds on Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26. This is the 4th year for the Grand River Water Festival and it will include lots of live music as well as informative sessions on rain gardens and barrels while it seeks to raise awareness of water issues in Michigan.

River City Wild Ones will be selling 1 quart-sized native forbs and grasses. Please sign-up to help! Current shifts are:

**Sat. 25: 1-3 pm**

**Sun. 26: 10am-noon, noon-2pm, 2-4 pm**

Contact Amy Heilman (616-308-8176 or [aheilman@rivercitywildones.org](mailto:aheilman@rivercitywildones.org)) to sign-up for a shift. This will be a fun event with good music and food each day. We encourage you to work in pairs for each shift, information on each plant will be provided.

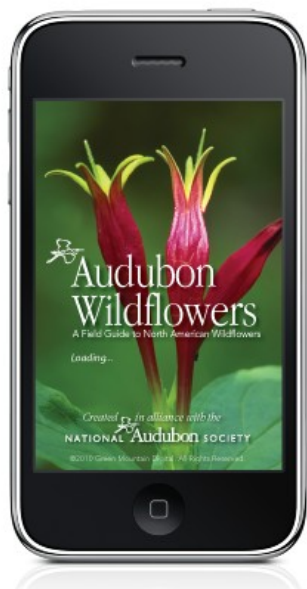
Funds raised will help support school gardens and other public educational projects.

**A big thank you** goes out to the following members who assisted in obtaining and potting up the plants: Carol Phelps, Eileen Smuker, Rachel Ford and Amy Heilman.



Carol and Eileen pot up native perennials.

## Got Apps?



There are several interesting iPhone/iPad/iPodtouch and Android apps out there for nature lovers. Here is a sampling:

### Project Noah – FREE iPhone App

Project Noah is a tool that aims to help people explore and document wildlife, identify plants and animals as well as, collect data from "citizen scientists" about where certain species are located.

- Discover thousands of organisms from around the world
- Document nature with your mobile phone
- Help scientists with ongoing research
- Earn virtual "patches" for various



missions that document plant, animal and insect life.

### Audubon Wildflowers A Field Guide to North American Wildflowers - \$9.99 For iPad, iPhone, iPod touch and Android

"Audubon Wildflowers, a mobile field guide app, is your essential guide to the wildflowers of North America with thousands of professional color photographs, range maps, and authoritative information and more."

Many other Audubon app titles available.

Do you know of other Apps that our members might like? Email [newsletter@rivercitywildones.org](mailto:newsletter@rivercitywildones.org) and we'll include your suggestion in a future newsletter!

## 2011 River City Wild Ones Calendar

**All programs (unless otherwise specified) will begin at 7 pm on the 3rd Monday of each month, February – November. Non-members are always welcome! Find more information for each event on our website.**

Date	Speaker/Topic	Location
Jun 20	Carol and Fritz Rottman/Native Prairie	11300 Hart St Greenville, MI 48838
Jul 18	Nathan Haan/Plaster Creek Watershed	Ken-O-Shay School 3155 Kalamazoo SE Grand Rapids, MI 49507
Aug 15	Cedar Creek Institute	701 W Cloverdale Rd Hastings, MI 49058
Sep 19	Dr. David Dornbos/Invasive Woody Shrubs	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids
Oct 17	To Be Announced	TBD
Nov 14	Fifth Annual Auction	Bunker Interpretive Center 1750 East Beltline Ave. SE Calvin College, Grand Rapids

