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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

Officers

President - **Amy Heilman**
VP - **Mike Bruggink**
Membership - **Gretchen Zuiderveen**
Outreach - **Carol Phelps**
Treasurer - **Harriet Bromberg**
Secretary - **Betsy Ford**

Planning Chairs

Garden Chair - **Sue Bouchard**
Hospitality - **Rhonda Reider & Barb Olson**
Newsletter - **Kim Davidson**
Ways & Means - **Meribeth Bolt & Sue Bouchard**
Web - **Roland Bouchard**

Advisory Board

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

7th Annual Mostly Silent Auction and Potluck

Monday, October 21, 2013 - 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Bunker Interpretive Center at Calvin College

The 7th annual silent auction and potluck is fast approaching. This is our main fundraiser for the year and the money is put to good use supporting our growing number of community projects and outreach. Last year we raised more than \$1000! This year, we plan to do even better by advertising to the general public and having donations from local businesses as well as from members.



November Program - Natural Shorelines

11/21/ 2013 - 7:00 PM - Bunker Interpretive Center at Calvin College
1750 East Beltline Ave. SE



Georgia Donovan, Local Landscape Designer and Certified Natural Shoreline Professional will lead a discussion on lake friendly and environmentally sound shoreline management solutions.

This is our last program for the year!! We will resume again in February 2014 with new programs!!

President's Position Open for 2014!

Dear Members,

This is such a wonderful group filled with passionate and dedicated people and I have so enjoyed my two terms as President and one term as VP of the River City Wild Ones Chapter! However, as my family's needs have become more demanding, I find it is time to step aside so another person has the chance to continue the leadership journey.

I firmly believe that new perspectives, fresh ideas and enthusiasm are key components to keeping an organization vital. We are blessed with many individuals who are passionate about being a Wild One and all it represents. I am confident that there are many of you out there who would excel as President – which is a minimum two year term (and goes very quickly believe me!)

Over the years, our board members have worked together to build a strong foundation for our chapter. We have expanded our educational programs and outreach, created a grant program and a bi-monthly newsletter and have developed a very informative website. We have the fastest growing chapter in the state and often serve as a role model for new and existing chapters!



We have come long way in the past years but there are always new avenues to explore and ideas to put into action...someone out there (maybe you!) can help us continue on this wild and wonderful path and I will be happy to help you get “up to speed” with any questions about the role. Each President brings their unique personality and talent to the position and makes it “their own.”

The Board will be looking for nominations in the next two months...please consider this opportunity for yourself or nominate that person you know who is too timid to nominate themselves! Keep us strong – keep us moving forward!

Though I will no longer be leading our chapter's efforts after this year, please know I still plan to stay very involved – this group means a great deal to me. Thank you everyone for your support over the past five years!

Sincerely,

Amy Heilman



August Program Recap - Amy Heilman (Photos courtesy of Amy Heilman and Ruth Oldenburg)

Our August 19th program at the Outdoor Discovery Center in Holland was full of surprises...beginning with a viewing of the Education Center. The building was chock-full of beautiful taxidermy mounts of various forms of Michigan wildlife. We learned that one of our members, Chris Baer, a taxidermist herself, provided several of the song bird mounts for this facility.



Program Manager Jamie Krupka gave us a history of the property which encompasses 130 acres and six different ecosystems. The development of this non-profit organization was initiated by local sportsman groups who wished to provide a natural setting in which children and families could learn and recreate in. They collaborated with local school districts to create the education center which employs several naturalists who tailor programs specific to each groups needs. They even have equipped a trailer to bring to schools who cannot afford to come to the center to learn about watershed science and other environmental themes. The Center's newest project is the construction of a nature-based preschool on the property – with a long waiting list already!

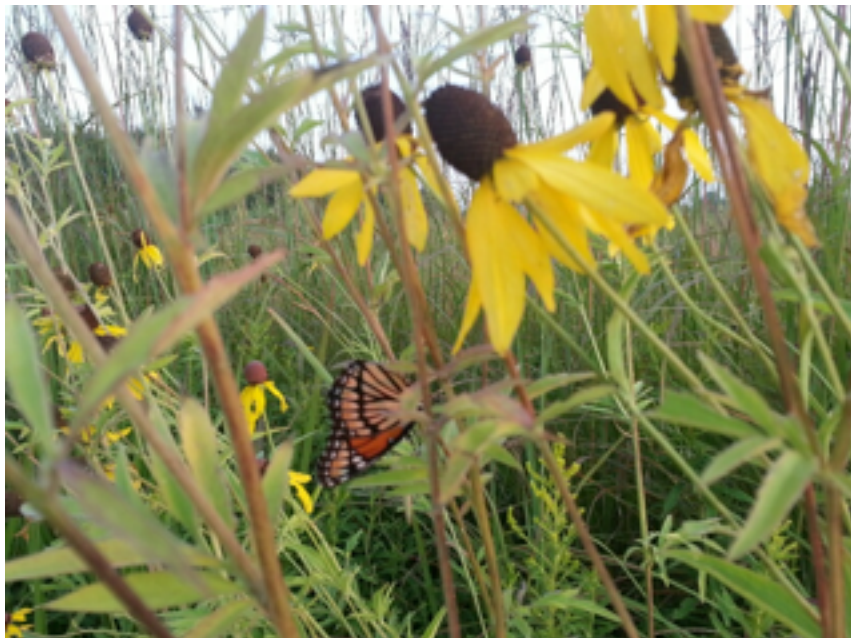


August Program Recap - Continued

As we hiked along some of the trail system, we encountered many native plant species -wildflowers, grasses, trees and shrubs. We were impressed by the site of a massive Black Gum tree (*Nyssa sylvatica*) and learned about the invasive



species management and seed collecting/broadcasting projects that local students have been involved in over the years. Jamie also pointed out a delightful Children's Natural Play Area and picnic facility. The property has nearly 4 miles of hiking trails which provide excellent wildlife viewing platforms, kayak/canoe launches, and interpretive signage. We also learned that the ODC contains an authentic reconstructed Native American Ottawa/Potawatomi summer village and a live birds of prey facility....if only we could have had time to see it all!! This is a must-see hidden gem of a site in Ottawa County and I encourage you to visit (or return for another visit) and explore it with a child ...or the child within you!



For more information and directions go to www.outdoordiscoverycenter.org

September Program Recap (Photos courtesy of Patricia Pennell)

Our September 16th program took us to Five Lakes Muskegon Nature Sanctuary where we were treated to a guided hike through a coastal plain marsh ecosystem by botanical specialist and Calvin College graduate Bill Martinus.



Ranger Steve's Nature Niche - Monarch Migration Plight

By - Ranger Steve Mueller

In September people see Monarch butterflies migrating south.

Kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Tacoma, collects Monarch caterpillars on milkweed plants and feeds them until they form a chrysalis. When the adult butterfly emerges to pump fluid into its bright orange wings, students see a miracle that most people have not witnessed. Once fluid has dried in the butterfly's wing veins, the class releases it for a 2000-mile journey to south central Mexico.

This year fewer Monarchs will be migrating. It has been a rough year and decade for survival. Dr. Lincoln Brower predicted long ago that migrating Monarch's would become a thing of the past during the first decades of the 21st century. It is hoped his prediction will prove wrong. The predictions of Brower and other scientists are based on several factors that have been building to diminish wildlife in North America.

Dr. 'Chip' Taylor of Monarch Watch highlighted factors. He said, for monarch recovery we need to create a lot of milkweed habitat and need to mobilize people to do it to save wildlife by creating habitats in yards and gardens. He continued that gardeners across this country could help by planting milkweed and using native plants to stabilize native pollinator communities. People now have another purpose for creating a garden. The purpose is conservation.

Taylor identifies factors that have led to the sharp drop in the monarch population.

1. Monarch numbers seen each year in the eastern United States and Canada are determined by the amount of habitat that remains. New roads, housing developments, and agricultural expansion serving a growing human population transform a natural landscape in ways that make it impossible for Monarchs to live.
2. Month to month temperature and moisture conditions are critical factors and are affected by climate change. *Climate change is well documented but the question of how much is human caused is still not precise. It is clear human activities are affecting the rate of climate change but quantifying exactly how much is exceedingly difficult.*
3. Increased planting of genetically modified corn in the U.S. Midwest promotes greater use of herbicides, which in turn kills milkweed. Monarch decline is coincident with the adoption of Roundup-ready corn and soybeans. We're basically creating a desert out there, except for the corn and the soybeans.
4. The increase of soybean and corn crops as bio-fuels has reduced wildlife habitat.
5. Extreme weather events threaten to become more common and may have a negative impact on Monarch populations *and other wildlife.*
6. Taylor points out that sustaining the monarch migration will be a challenge that requires support and cooperation of Canada, the United States and Mexico. *This is symptomatic of issues affecting plant and animal nature niches and may impact our national wellbeing.*

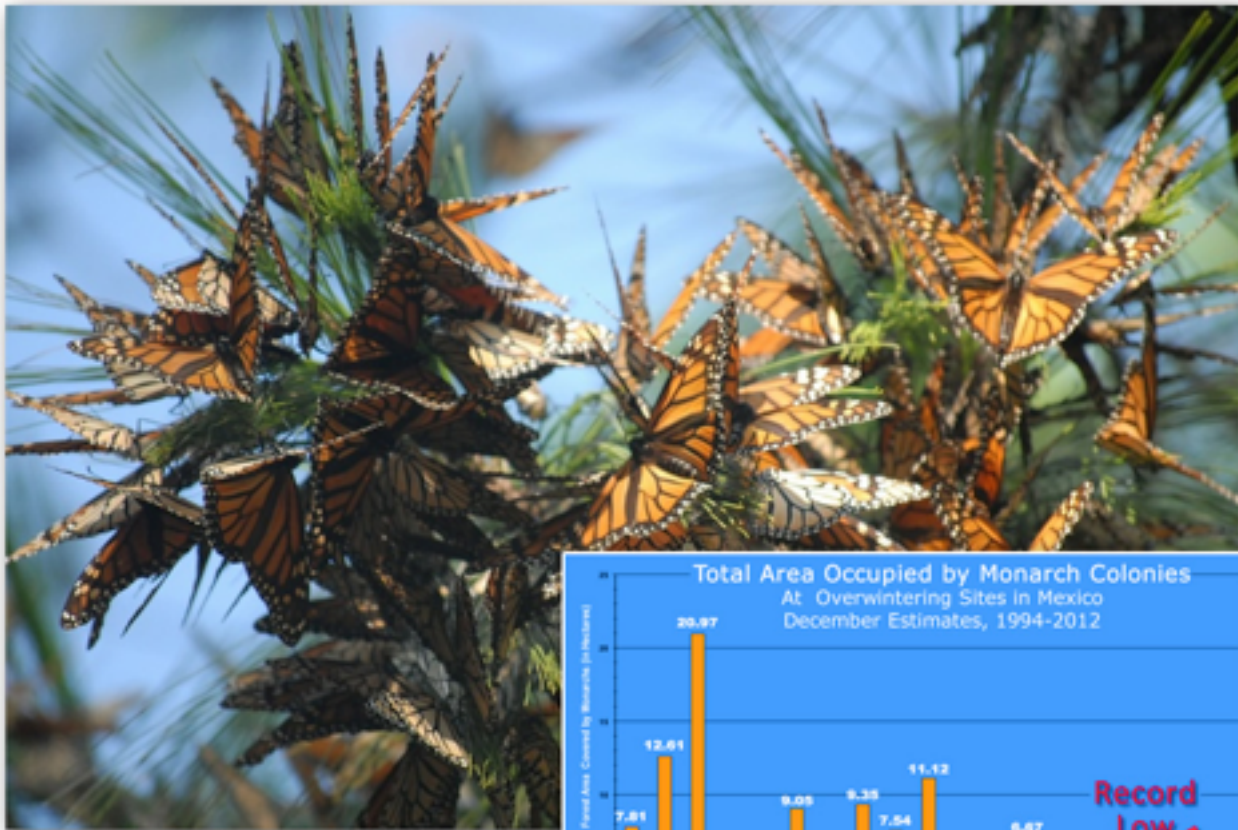
Monarch Migration Plight - Continued

7. As human populations grows, lumbering, clearing land for growing food and grazing cattle reduces space essential for survival of other life forms *on which society is dependent*.

8. Our own population is projected to increase by two billion people by 2040 so Taylor doesn't see the monarch in that future world. Our population cannot continually grow and also maintain a healthy world. We are going to see a lot of changes. There are natural restrictions on how fast populations can grow based on food production, declining arable land, and limitations of water. If we don't get with it and if we don't start modifying our behavior, life is going to get to be pretty tough. He says the Monarch issue is his way of introducing people to the larger issues.

9. Monarch over wintering sites are vulnerable for a number of reasons. A census taken at the monarchs' wintering grounds found their population had declined 59 percent over the previous year and was at the lowest level ever measured. Italics in this article are my commentary additions. To read Taylor's complete discussion go to http://e360.yale.edu/feature/tracking_the_causes_of_sharp_decline_of_the_monarch_butterfly/2634/

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



Data released March 13, 2013
World Wildlife Fund-Mexico
Comisionado Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas



Natives to Know ~ Fringed Gentian (*Gentianopsis crinita*)

By Joyce Tuharsky

While hiking along the southwest shore of Manitoulin Island (in Lake Huron on the Canadian side), my family and I encountered strikingly beautiful, intense blue, trumpet-shaped flowers with delicately fringed petals. It wasn't until we were back in GR that we discovered how lucky we were to have witnessed Fringed Gentians in bloom!

Fringed Gentians can be an annual or a biennial (living 1 or 2 years) and are among the last wildflowers to bloom in the season: August-October. Initially, the plant forms only a low rosette of leaves near the ground. Later, or in the 2nd year, it sends out erect, 8-24" tall, flowering stalks. The flowers are solitary, 1-2 inches wide, with 4 fringed petals. They open only in full sun and close at night or on cloudy days. When closed, the flowers twist into a showy spiral bud. Upon opening, the petals spread almost horizontally.

This wildflower reproduces primarily by seed. Two-part capsules contain many seeds, each of which has numerous tiny projections which make them easily dispersed by wind or water. The leaves are 1-2 inches long, opposite, ovate, stalkless, yellow-green, with prominent central veins and slightly succulent.

The main pollinators of Fringed Gentians are robust bumblebees that often manage to force their way into the flowers even when closed. Some scientists believe that the fringes on the petals provide some protection from ants, which are highly attracted to the nectar. The plant's bitter foliage is rarely bothered by insects or herbivores.

Native to much of eastern U.S. and Canada, including Michigan, Fringed Gentian are nevertheless uncommon throughout its range and is listed as threatened in some states. The plant is restricted to moist early-successional sites with nearly neutral pH soils, reduced competition from other plants, and where certain bacteria or fungi are present in the soil. Therefore, Fringed Gentian should never be picked or transplanted!

Research at Cornell University suggests that Fringed Gentian may be a remnant species from the late-glacial period of eastern North America, before forest cover developed 12,000 years ago. The plant would have been ideally suited to growing on unstable calcareous substrates (underlying chalk or [limestone](#) rock) often found along ice margins. The genus is known to have been present at the time, and the current

range of this plant is largely within regions that were once glaciated. As forests came to dominate, habitat suitable for Fringed Gentians appears now to be restricted to relatively few edge areas.

The Fringed Gentian's fleeting, exquisite beauty has drawn the attention of artists and poets. It is cited in works by Henry David Thoreau, William Cullen Bryant, and Emily Dickinson.

More information and photos at:

<http://plants.usda.gov/core/profile?symbol=GECCR2>

http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/wetland/plants/fr_gentian.html

<http://www.nhdfl.org/library/pdf/FS-FringedGentian.pdf>



Roselle Park River Festival - 2013 (Photos courtesy of Kim Davidson)

A BIG Thanks goes out to our members that helped staff our Wild Ones booth at this years Roselle Park River Festival on September 28th. We had great weather and a wonderful turn out of families at this years event! Once again we had our famous activity of seed ball making for children to take part in! Hopefully all those seeds will take root wherever they were spread after the festival!



“Listen! The wind is rising, and the air is wild with leaves,
We have had our summer evenings, now for October eves!”



- Humbert Wolfe



Photos courtesy of Amy Heilman & Ruth Oldenburg